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PETER CAPALDI

ISSUE 494
January 2016
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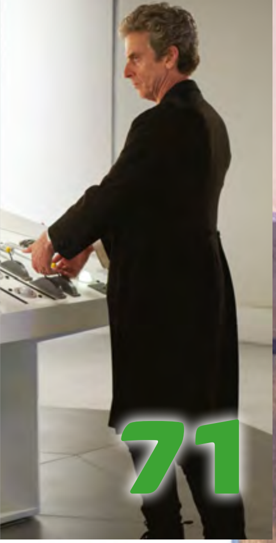

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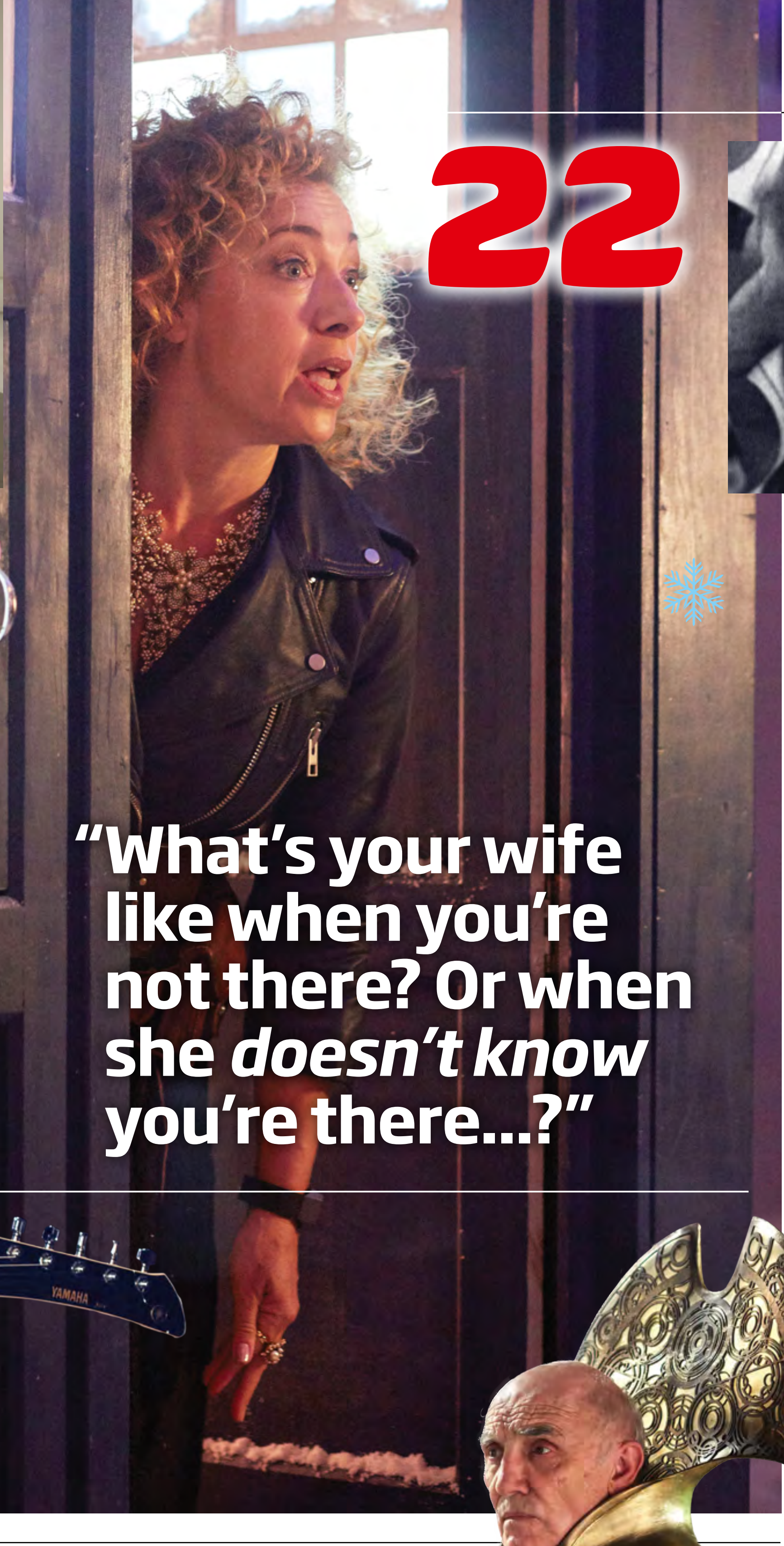

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“What’s your wife like when you’re not there? Or when she *doesn’t know* you’re there…?”

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Letter from the Editor

I hope you’re reading this after the amazing events of *Doctor Who*’s season finale – and what an incredible season it’s been! As you might know, time moves at a funny speed in the **DWM** offices, so while you’ve already seen Episode 12, I’m stuck back in November. And although I’ve got Episode 12 here to watch, I don’t actually have any time to sit down and enjoy it, as it’s deadline day! Hmph. And those images of the 1960s-style TARDIS console are taunting me so much, too.

Meanwhile, in true *W1A* style, it’s another day entirely. Two weeks earlier, in fact – Thursday 12 November – and I’ve just nagged Steven Moffat to tell me the title of this year’s Christmas Special, because we have to send the files for our plastic bag to the printer, and I want to write some blurb for it.

‘Oh, the only limit is my indecision: it’s either *The Husband of River Song* or *The Husbands of River Song*. What do you think?’ Steven replied. After I’d jokingly suggested that he call it *Bigamy in Space*, we decided that *Husbands* plural sounded more interesting, and anyway, we’d run out of time because our plastic company (they’re called ‘Auto-Plastics’ – I’m sure there’s nothing sinister about that) was nagging us for the files. And thus, dear reader, the title of the 2015 Christmas Special was born. It’s all about the **DWM** polybag – yes, that thing that you’ve already scrunched up and thrown in the bin to be able to read this.

Meanwhile, at exactly the same time, it’s a month later, and I’ve just come back from a lovely weekend in Chicago with the nice people at Chicago-TARDIS. This hasn’t actually happened yet, so I can’t say exactly *how* lovely it was, but I’m sure it was.

And incidentally, a Happy Christmas to all of you at home!

Tom

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Ask STEVEN MOFFAT

Answering the burning questions posed by DWM readers – the man in charge of *Doctor Who*!

"Osgood is Osgood; it doesn't matter if they're both Zygons. She is not *what* she is, she is *who* she is."

■ **ANDY PETERS asks: In the Zygon two-parter, it is asserted repeatedly that the peace treaty only works because there are two Osgoods – one human and one Zygon – representing each species. When Bonnie becomes the new Osgood, can it be inferred that the other Osgood is human, because it takes one of each species to keep the peace? (What good is the treaty if two members of the same species are charged with its safety?)**

Pick a corner, stand in it. Osgood is Osgood. Osgoods are Osgoods. Doesn't matter if they're both Zygons or both human, it makes no difference. She is not *what* she is, she is *who* she is. And her work will be done when the rest of us understand that. The world is kept safe by the righteous fervour of fan girls – I've never been more certain of anything in my life.

■ **SALLY DAVIS asks: When you killed off Osgood in *Death in Heaven*, did you know that you'd be bringing her back?**

I absolutely did, yes. I knew where we were going with all that from the end of *The Day of the Doctor*. At first I assumed we'd kill off one Osgood at the start of the Zygon story, but when I was writing *Death in Heaven*, I needed a way to establish Missy's evil credentials (in case Michelle was just too damn loveable, and wasn't she just?), and the opportunity presented itself. As murder often does.

■ **JACOB LOCKETT asks: It is explained in *The Zygon Invasion* that 20 million Zygons were allowed to take human form. So, where are the 20 million humans that the Zygons took body prints of? Are they all in stasis somewhere?**

No, no. I think we blurred that explanation in our all-action (and monologuing) two-parter, but the idea is that the Zygons take the human form of various British citizens, and then decamp to other countries, forbidden to interact with their duplicates. Except for my Zygon. My Zygon does all my panels and interviews for me, while I stay at home and make *Doctor Who* and *Sherlock*. Rubbish, isn't he? I do wish he'd lay off the biscuits. And his hair isn't very realistic.

Alien among us: a Zygon lurks on a panel at the *Doctor Who* Festival.

Osgood: we can't get enough of her.

■ **ELIZABETH W asks: How come the Doctor allowed River Song to go freely with her vortex manipulator but he kept disabling Jack's?**

Every time he grabs River's wrist, it all goes very wrong.

■ **RICHARD PROCTOR asks: What made the Doctor realise that he needed to look for a Trap Street in *Face the Raven*?**

It went something like this ...

Ah. Do come in. Obviously, I've been expecting you, but then you'd expect me to, wouldn't you. No, don't speak. I don't like other people speaking – can't bear all that waiting around for my go, it's boring. Do you want to hang up your coat? No, of course not. You prefer to keep it on in a flailing attempt at charisma, don't you? Better than that ridiculous long scarf, I suppose – nope, spoke too soon, I just saw the lining.

Do please, stop looking around – the nice one isn't here. He's got a wife these days. They're off doing whatever married people do. They don't do it here any more. I was forced to give them a long and fairly detailed lecture about the noise the last time. On reflection, I should probably have done that from outside the room. So do have a seat.

I said no talking. I already know what your problem is. Largely because I am a fictional construct you have created inside your mind, based on a famous literary character, to help you articulate an interior monologue. In this context, I represent reason and logic – excellent choice, if I may say. I notice you have transplanted me to the modern world, for ease of communication. Nice, I like it here. I might stay. As long as I can pop home for Christmas.

Now then – no, don't talk. I know the details already. Of course I do, I'm in your head. Cramped here, isn't it? However do you manage.

So. This tattoo on Rigsy's neck. Sadly, data is limited, so there is very little I can deduce. Beyond the fact that there is an alien community living in secrecy close by, with a strictly enforced legal system, I'm afraid I can conclude almost nothing.

... do please warn me if you're going to raise your eyebrows like that, the draft was quite unpleasant.

My reasoning, if you can follow it, is this. That the tattoo is alien, is beyond doubt. Who then, has Rigsy encountered? We know his memory has been wiped, so this is an alien who values secrecy. A benign alien in this predicament would simply have wiped his memory and sent him home. A malevolent one would have killed him. Instead we have this curious compromise – a countdown tattoo. The likelihood that the tattoo is of terminal significance is so extremely probable, I fear we can dismiss the other possibilities. This is not murder, it is a death sentence. A death sentence does not exist in the absence of a legal system of some kind, and a legal system does not exist in the absence of a community. Hence there is a secret alien community close by. I say 'close' because the boy has not travelled far, and 'secret' because I don't know about it.

Do drop in on Mrs H on the way out, she enjoys the company of men of a certain age – though I should advise you to loiter near the door.

Oh, and Merry Christmas. DWM

"Just try and stop me."

If you have a question you'd like Steven to answer, email us at *dwm@panini.co.uk* with 'Ask Steven' in the subject line.

The Doctor will return... but in what time zone?

With the 2015 series now transmitted, thoughts turn to the Christmas Special, *The Husbands of River Song*, which as per tradition will be broadcast on Christmas Day [see our preview on page 22].

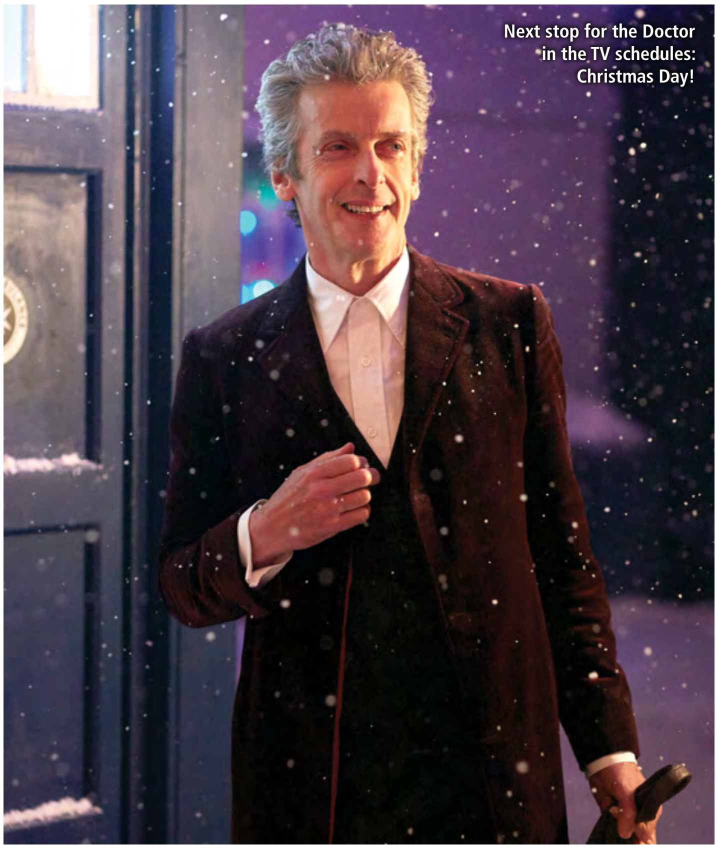
Following that, a brand-new series of *Doctor Who* will go into production in 2016, which will once again be executive-produced by Steven Moffat, and will star Peter Capaldi as the Doctor. But there's now a vacancy to fill in the TARDIS...

"I think the new companion will come in pretty quickly," Steven commented to assembled members of Her Majesty's press in early November. "Obviously we have River at Christmas, and then the new series will feature the new companion – probably from Episode 1. It's possible that we'll have a new idea later... but that's the plan at the moment."

There has been some media speculation about when the next series will air, and how many episodes it will comprise. Steven stated, "We're making a full series – I can confirm that. It's a full series of 12 episodes plus a Christmas Special, but I don't know when it will go out. That's up to the BBC."

The BBC's recent scheduling of the show has seen *Doctor Who* pushed into a post-8pm slot following the hugely popular *Strictly Come Dancing* on Saturday nights. Both Steven and Peter Capaldi recently expressed concern at this scheduling – and hope for an earlier timeslot when it returns...

"I feel it's slightly used as a pawn in a Saturday night warfare," Peter told the press, when quizzed about the transmission slot. "I feel as if it should go out at 7:30pm, or around that time. I meet a lot of kids and their families who all love *Doctor Who*, and want to sit down and watch it together. I used to do that with my daughter when it came back, so it has to be on at a time that's reasonable for them to do that. Once you're past 8pm, you're getting into adult territory – and although a lot of adults really like it, at its heart, it's designed to entertain children as well. So I think it's a shame they're not being given that opportunity."


Next stop for the Doctor in the TV schedules: Christmas Day!

Steven agreed, commenting, "I don't think 8:25pm is brilliant for *Doctor Who*. I'm not blasting the BBC or getting cross or anything, but that's not smart. I don't think anyone thinks that's smart. If there's a slight drop off in our ratings – and it's only slight – I think it's because that's not where *Doctor Who* is meant to be. *Doctor Who* is not designed and built to go out at 8:25pm – that's *Sherlock* o'clock. *Doctor Who* is for earlier in the evening."

DWM reports on *Doctor Who*'s recent ratings and its place in the TV schedules in *Public Image* on page 11. Work on the next series of *Doctor Who* will begin in earnest in 2016...

BBC Store launches

A wealth of shows from the BBC archives, including *Doctor Who*, is now available to be streamed or downloaded as digital versions through the BBC Store, an online shop launched by BBC Worldwide in November.

Peter Capaldi, Jenna Coleman, Michelle Gomez and Mark Gatiss feature in the trailer showcasing the new online shop, with Peter Capaldi describing the Store as "An amazing, brand-new resource."

The BBC Store offers the chance for fans to buy or download the majority of *Doctor Who* episodes which still exist, including every episode since 2005's *Rose*. The 1967 Second Doctor adventure *The Underwater Menace* is one of the headline items in the Drama section of the site, although the bonus features from the recent DVD release are not available here.

Every episode from *Rose* onwards is now on the BBC Store.

The Underwater Menace: one of many older stories available.

1981 spin-off *K9 and Company* is also at the BBC Store.

Other programmes of interest to *Doctor Who* fans that have been made available include spin-offs *K9 and Company* and *Torchwood*; *The Quatermass Experiment* starring David Tennant and Mark Gatiss; and the 1982 serial *The Hound of the Baskervilles* starring Tom Baker as Sherlock Holmes.

Dan Phelan, BBC Worldwide's Head of Communications, tells **DWM**, "We'll soon be publishing a '*Doctor Who* for Beginners' page which will help newer fans to the show explore the Whoniverse and discover recent and modern classics. Eventually, all the existing episodes will be up there – plus more gems from the BBC Television Archive.

"If **DWM** readers want to let us know what they'd like to see in the future, they can get in touch by tweeting us *@bbcstore* or by posting on our Facebook page. We can't promise to get everything everyone wants, but we're really interested in what else you'd like to see..."

For more information, pay a visit to *www.store.bbc.com*

Katy comes to Liverpool!

Katy's Evening

■ Katy Manning, who played the Third Doctor's companion Jo Grant in the 1970s, will appear at St George's Hall in Liverpool on Saturday 19 March 2016. Tickets for 'An Evening with Katy Manning' cost £15.00 each (plus booking fees) and are on sale now from TicketQuarter. For further details. visit *tinyurl.com/Katy19March*

Digital DWM

■ All issues of **Doctor Who Magazine** from issue 452 onwards are now available on a wide range of digital platforms. The magazine can now also be purchased through *Pocketmags.com* for PC and Mac, plus on Apple, Android, Amazon and Windows 8 devices via the Pocketmags app. Also available is every issue of *Doctor Who: 50 Years* and *The Essential Doctor Who*, recent issues of *Doctor Who Adventures*, and all **DWM** Special Editions from issue 34 onwards. Prices start from just £2.49, and subscriptions are also available.

DWM Yearbook 2016

■ The latest **DWM** Special, *The Doctor Who Yearbook* 2016, will be published on Thursday 17 December, priced just £5.99. The 100-page mag includes features on every episode of the last series, as well as exclusive interviews with cast and crew members.

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Festival Edition Special Offer!

■ A special limited edition version of **DWM** 493 was produced for the recent *Doctor Who* Festival, and we have some copies left over for UK fans who'd like to purchase one. See page 99 for details of how to order.

The War Doctor's adventures continue...

John Hurt reprises his *Day of the Doctor* role for Big Finish!

Audio production company Big Finish has revealed more details of the next series of adventures to start John Hurt as the Doctor. He will return in February 2016 in *Infernal Devices*, which comprises three interlinked adventures. *Blakes' 7* star Jacqueline Pearce also stars as Time Lord Cardinal Ollistra, alongside Nicholas Briggs as the voice of the Daleks.

FULL-CAST AUDIO DRAMA
BBC
DOCTOR WHO
THE WAR DOCTOR
INFERNAL DEVICES
STARRING JOHN HURT AND JACQUELINE PEARCE

The War Doctor's adventures begin this month with *Only the Monstrous*, an epic three-hour audio story, written and directed by Nick Briggs. "Working with John Hurt has been a massive privilege that sort of crept up on me," Nick tells **DWM**. "I'd been concentrating so hard on getting the scripts right with Matt Fitton, David Richardson and the BBC, then I was caught up in all the preparations for the recording, it didn't quite hit me until we started recording! And he's such a lovely human being."

"*Only the Monstrous* was very much Nick Briggs' vision for one huge movie-length war tale," says producer David Richardson. "We've changed the format a little with the second box set, *Infernal Devices*, which has three different writers, led by the wickedly clever mind of script editor Matt Fitton."

The first tale in *Infernal Devices* is *Legion of the Lost* by John Dorney, which takes the Doctor to Aldriss. There, the mysterious Technomancers – beings who combine the powers of magic and technology – offer to use their skills to alter the outcome of the Time War... The guest cast includes Zoe Tapper as Collis, Robert Hands as Solex and David Warner as Shadovar.

"David Warner and John Hurt are old friends, but hadn't seen each other for some time," says David. "David emailed me ahead of the production and said, 'I'd love to see John again – could I pop in for 10 minutes as a surprise?' Little did he know he was already top of our list to be in this episode anyway!"

The second story is *A Thing of Guile* by Phil Mulryne, in which the Doctor, Ollistra and a crack team of troops strike deep within Dalek enemy lines. Asteroid Theta 12 holds a secret – one that a Dalek faction is withholding even from Dalek high command – and Ollistra intends to discover what that secret is... Oliver Dimsdale plays Commander Trelon.

Finally, in *The Neverwhen* by Matt Fitton, the Doctor arrives in a place that the TARDIS designates 'no place and no time'; a place ravaged by warfare. But what significance does the Neverwhen hold for the Time War? Barnaby Kay plays Commander Thrakken, Jaye Griffiths is Daylin and Tim Bentinck is General Kallix.

A third box set of War Doctor stories, entitled *Agents of Chaos*, will follow in September 2016. Visit *www.bigfinish.com* for more details of the series.

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Times have changed.

Dress for the occasion!

New Zealand-based company Black Milk has released a range of stylish female clothing inspired by *Doctor Who*.

The garments include swimsuits, leggings, tops, skirts and dresses, with prices starting from $55 NZ dollars. See *blackmilkclothing.com* for details.

Beyond the **TARDIS**

BY **DOMINIC MAY**

A round-up of what the cast and crew of *Doctor Who* have been up to away from the series…

Capaldi Capture

■ A previously unseen picture of **Peter Capaldi** forms part of the Taylor Wessing Photographic Portrait Prize Exhibition at the National Portrait Gallery until 21 February. Further to **DWM** 492, it transpires Peter, who was on *The Graham Norton Show* with **David Walliams** on 20 November, will not direct *Veep* having been misrepresented by a *ShortList.com* reporter. **Jenna Coleman**'s feature film *Me Before You* has had its US release brought forward to 4 March (UK 3 June).

New Tennant

■ Congratulations to **David Tennant** and **Georgia Moffett** on extending their family with the arrival of a new sister for Ty, Olive and Wilfred. David made multi-promotional appearances in support of his role as Zebediah Kilgrave in *Marvel's Jessica Jones* during November including *The Jonathan Ross Show*, *Good Morning Britain* and *Late Night with Seth Meyers*. He also appeared on ITV's *The Nation's Favourite Beatles Number One* on 11 November, voiced Igor for *Mickey Mouse Clubhouse* Halloween Special *Mickey's Monster Musical*, contributed to the *Just Cause 3* computer game released on 1 December and will record two further Radio 4 *Just a Minute* editions in January.

David Tennant in *Marvel's Jessica Jones*.

Behind Who

■ **Louise Jameson**, who tours as Mrs Boyle in the 60th anniversary production of *The Mousetrap* from 19 January to 30 July, is Fairy Godmother in *Cinderella* at Tunbridge Wells Assembly Hall from 11 December to 3 January. **Nicholas Pegg** is writer of *Aladdin* at Hornchurch's Queens Theatre. **Andrew Hayden-Smith** is Danon in *Beauty and the Beast* at The Capitol, Horsham. **Warwick Davies** plays Prof in *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs* at the Bristol Hippodrome.

Louise Jameson stars in *The Mousetrap*.

Boxing Days

■ Besides *Doctor Who*, BBC One highlights over the Christmas and New Year period include **Catherine Tate**'s *Nan* Specials, **David Walliams**' *Billionaire Boy*, featuring Tate as Sapphire Diamond with **Warwick Davis** and **Rebecca Front**, and the *Sherlock* New Year's Day Special *The Abominable Bride* by **Steven Moffat** and **Mark Gatiss**, which will also screen in cinemas including behind-the-scenes material. **Neil Cross**' two-part *Luther* Special airs 15 and 22 December (BBC America 17 December) while *Professor Branestawm* returns featuring **Adrian Scarborough**, **Steve Pemberton**, **Diana Rigg**, **David Mitchell** and **Charlie Higson**. *Gypsy* featuring **Peter Davison** as Herbie opposite *Imelda Staunton* is also expected, most likely on BBC Four. **Samuel Anderson** reprises assistant store manager Daniel Wilson opposite **Jason Watkins** in Series Five of Sky 1's *Trollied* (he is also a Jehovah's Witness in current cinema release *The Lady in the Van*). **Alexander Armstrong** presents BBC One's *Bruce's Hall of Fame with Alexander Armstrong* featuring **Catherine Tate** and **Adam Garcia**. Finally, **Penelope Wilton**, **Samantha Bond**, **Hugh Bonneville** and **Raquel Cassidy** bid adieu to their *Downton Abbey* aliases on Christmas Day.

Season's Treatings

■ *I Want My Hat Back*, with music by **Arthur Darvill**, is at London's National Theatre's Temporary Theatre until 2 January. **Christopher Eccleston** narrates the audio of musical book *Barry the Penguin's Black and White Christmas* with **Louise Jameson** as Sister Actavia. **John Simm** is Lenny with **Gemma Chan** and **Ron Cook** in *The Homecoming* at London's Trafalgar Studios until 13 February. **Gugu Mbatha-Raw** plays Prema Mutiso in NFL injury picture *Concussion* (US Christmas Day; UK 29 January). **Adjoa Andoh** is Madame de Volanges in *Les Liaisons Dangereuses* at London's Donmar Warehouse until 13 February. **Rona Munro** and **Stephen Greenhorn**'s *Tracks of the Winter Bear* is at Edinburgh's Traverse Theatre until 24 December.

All the Trimmings

■ **Kylie Minogue**, who switched on London's Oxford Street lights on 1 November, plays at the Royal Albert Hall on 11 December supporting her *Kylie Christmas* album including duet *Only You* with **James Corden**. **Jessica Martin** is Emily Hobbs in *Elf* at London's Dominion Theatre. **David Morrissey** and **Simon Rouse** have transferred to London's Wyndham's Theatre in *Hangmen*. **MyAnna Buring**, who is Jules Hope in ITV's *Prey* until 23 December, plays Carla in *The Wasp* at London's Trafalgar Studios 2. **David Troughton** is Tom Oakley in *Goodnight Mr Tom* at London's Duke of York's Theatre ahead of a tour.

BBC One's *Sherlock* returns on New Year's Day.

Writers Mark Gatiss and Steven Moffat visit the *Sherlock* set.

Euros Success

■ **Russell T Davies** presented **Euros Lyn** with BAFTA Cymru's Siân Phillips Award on 27 September for his contribution to international feature filmmaking or network television. Lyn lately completed shooting Welsh language thriller *Y Llyfrgell* (*The Library Suicides*) starring **Catrin Stewart** as identical twin librarians Ana/Nan.

Quickies

■ *Doctor Who* was cited in BBC Two's *Let Us Entertain You: Modern Victorians* on 18 November. **Christopher Eccleston** and **Paterson Joseph** helped front the visual campaign for *Panic! What Happened to Social Mobility in the Arts?* in November and December. **Catherine Tate** related *The Catchment Area* for Dave's *Crackanory* on 8 December. Parachute Regiment veteran **Bernard Cribbins** read Rudyard Kipling's *Tommy* at the Royal British Legion Armistice Day Remembrance in Trafalgar Square on 11 November. C4 broadcast **John Barrowman**'s Small Animal Hospital from 15 to 29 November. **Mark Gatiss** played drug dealer Rich in BBC Two's *London Spy* on 23 November and has recorded BBC TV pilot *The Chastity Butterworth Show*. **Rachel Talalay** directed episode 4 of supernatural horror drama *South of Hell*, entitled *White Noise*, made available via WE TV on 27 November.

Kenneth Gilbert in *The Seeds of Doom*.

Obituary

■ **Byrd Wilkins** (real name William Byrd Wilkins), who played the Preacher in *A Town Called Mercy*, died on 31 October aged 50. *Grange Hill*'s **Michael Percival**, who was the Inspector in *The Vampires of Venice*, died in September. **Kenneth Gilbert**, who played Richard Dunbar in *The Seeds of Doom*, died on 29 October aged 84. James Bond stuntman **Roy Street**, who was an extra in *The Ambassadors of Death*, *Inferno*, *Terror of the Autons*, *The Curse of Peladon* and *The Masque of Mandragora*, died on 28 August aged 79. Also lately deceased is **Gary (Garry) Dean**, who clocked up 22 episodes across 14 stories between *The Ice Warriors* and *Remembrance of the Daleks*. **DWM**

Thanks to NGW Ltd, David Saunders, Alasdair Macfarlane, Russell T Davies, Toby Hadoke, Andrew Cartmel, David Howe, Louise Jameson, Chris Chibnall, Alex Hawe and numerous *Doctor Who* cast, crew, agents and websites for invaluable input into 2015's *Beyond the TARDIS*.

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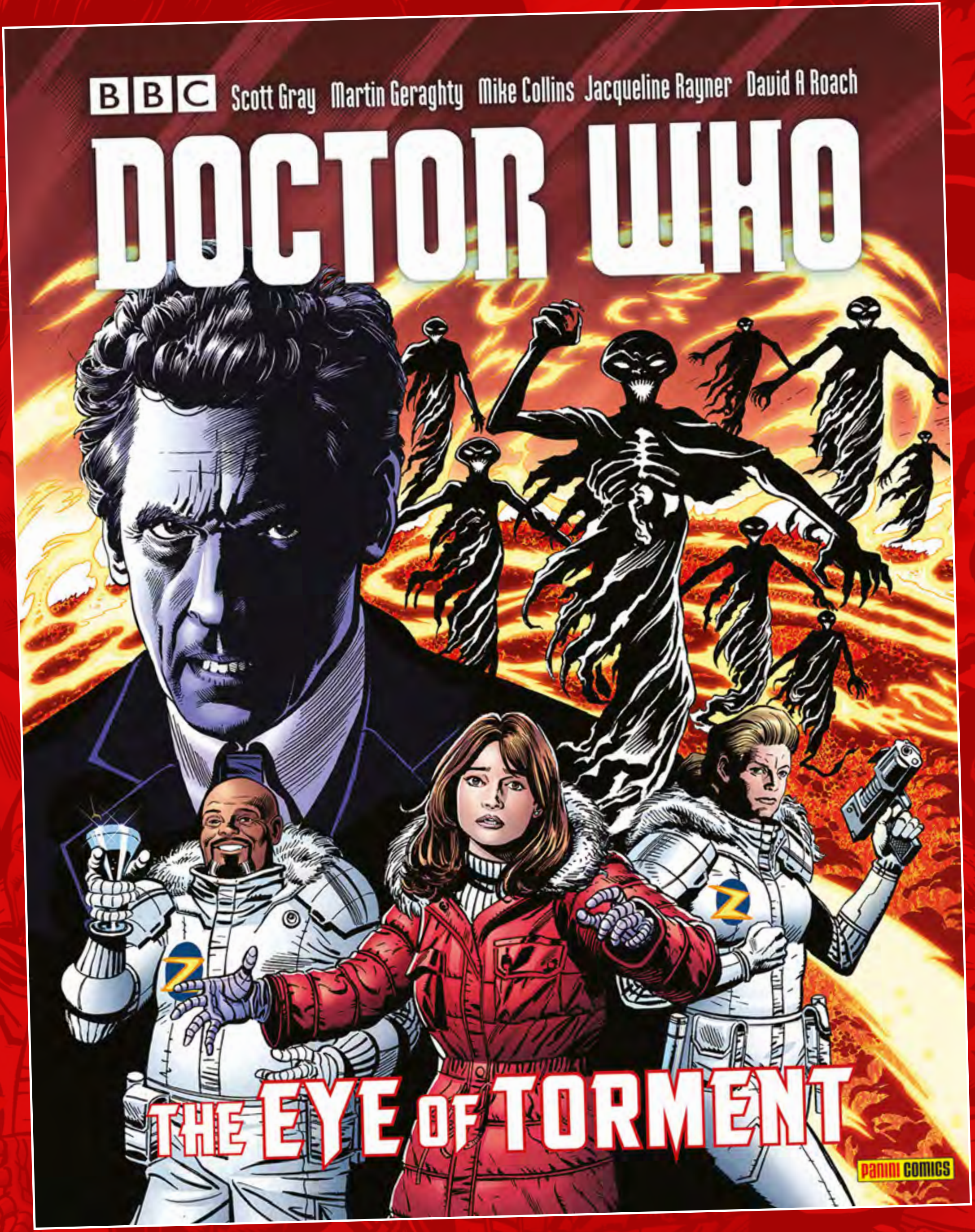
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Public IMAGE

BY **TOM SPILSBURY**

Taking a look at the latest series' performance in the television ratings war...

The Doctor and Clara check to see who's watching.

The Doctor's ratings hold firm at around the 6 million mark

Last issue, *Public Image* analysed the effect of the Rugby World Cup on *Doctor Who*'s ratings – which have, as much discussed, taken something of a knock this year. While the 2014 series averaged 7.26 million viewers in consolidated BARB figures, the first five episodes of this year's run ranged between 5.63 and 6.56 million – averaging 6.10 million. So with the lure of the rugby over, how has *Doctor Who* performed since then?

The answer is: pretty much the same. Episode 6, *The Woman Who Lived*, had a consolidated rating of **6.11 million** after the usual seven days' worth of catch-up viewers were considered, giving the episode a position of 25th on the weekly TV chart. ITV's *The X Factor*, meanwhile, returned as the Doctor's competition, with a consolidated audience of 7.77 million (plus 0.41 million on ITV+1) – which was a low-ish rating by the singing show's usual standards.

The next episode, *The Zygon Invasion*, went out on Halloween night, and earned a consolidated audience of **5.76 million** viewers, making it the 24th most watched programme of the week. The programme scheduled immediately before *Doctor Who* – BBC One's *Strictly Come Dancing* – had 10.85 million; the week's highest TV rating. Meanwhile, over on ITV, *The X Factor* had a consolidated rating of 6.95 million (with another 0.29m on ITV+1), which was, amazingly, its lowest Saturday night rating since 20 October 2007! It seems that quite a few trick-or-treaters decided to turn off their television sets that night – well, after *Strictly* had finished, anyway.

Episode 8, *The Zygon Inversion*, bounced back slightly, attracting a consolidated **6.03 million**, again putting *Doctor Who* at 24th place in the weekly chart. This time *The X Factor* had 7.61 million (plus 0.27 million on ITV+1) and *Strictly* had 10.77 million.

One week later, Episode 9, *Sleep No More*, closed on a total of **5.61 million** viewers (26th place) – sadly marking another low for the series since its comeback in 2005 – while *Strictly* topped the week's TV chart with a series high of 11.71 million and *The X Factor* had 7.27 million (plus 0.23 million on ITV+1).

As it stands, *Doctor Who*'s ratings this year remain in the 'good' rather than 'excellent' category, putting it in the same ballpark as other BBC One dramas such as *The Syndicate* (which averaged 6.46 million earlier this year), *New Tricks* (6.28 million), and *Ordinary Lies* (5.82 million). *Doctor Who* falls some way short of BBC One's biggest dramas in 2015; *Call the Midwife* (which averaged 10.35 million), *Death in Paradise* (8.60 million), *Silent Witness* (8.29 million), *Doctor Foster* (8.19 million) and *Poldark* (7.60 million).

A couple of issues back, I gave the BBC a bit of a hard time for not promoting *Doctor Who* very well at the start of this year's run. I think the price of those decisions has been well and truly paid – more than one million *Doctor Who* viewers have gone missing between seasons, and once viewers have missed the first two, three, or four episodes of a series, they're unlikely to be tempted back half-way through the season. The distraction of the Rugby World Cup may be over, but the Doctor's ratings simply haven't returned to the level they were at last year. 6.56 million looks likely to be the peak for this year's series – unless the big finale gathered a bit of momentum? (I'll let you know next issue.)

It has to be said, though, that poor promotion and riveting rugby haven't been the only problems *Doctor Who* has faced this year, and the other big one – shonky scheduling – is one that has been discussed by both the lead actor and the showrunner [see page 7] over the past few weeks. And to be frank, I think they raise a very good and very interesting point.

So let's talk scheduling. Positioned after *Strictly Come Dancing* on Saturday nights (Episode 1 aside), *Doctor Who* has been starting after 8pm this year – sometimes as late at 8:25pm. With a post-9pm finish, it's probably just too late in the evening for younger children to be allowed to watch. And if the young audience doesn't happen to stumble on the show now, what chance will they have of becoming hooked? Yes, there's iPlayer, but I'm not at all convinced that viewers *discover* shows on iPlayer. People watch shows on iPlayer that they're already a regular viewer of. We've got to think of the audience of years to come, and if youngsters aren't coming to *Doctor Who* in 2015, that's bad news for the future.

I'm also not convinced that it's particularly helpful that the BBC's trailers seem to highlight iPlayer as the way to watch the show. Yes, of course it's good that people have an opportunity to catch up, and it's good to make them aware of this – but if they've been trained to get *out* of the habit of watching on Saturday nights, then it's very difficult to ever get them back *into* that habit. And the danger is that the urgency to watch can then be delayed for a day, two days... a week... or maybe people won't ever get around to it at all.

'Why can't *Doctor Who* swap places with *Strictly*?' some have cried. Well, at the risk of revealing some industry secrets, *Strictly* can't finish later than 8:30pm because the Sunday results show is actually recorded later on the Saturday night, which means that after the live show has finished, there has to be time for votes to be cast and counted, and then for the results show to be recorded, while still allowing the audience to catch the train home. So the swap isn't possible – *Strictly* has to run roughly from 6:30pm till 8:30pm.

But there's another problem for *Doctor Who* here, besides the post-watershed finish and the clash with *The X Factor*. Back in 2011 and 2012, occasional episodes such as *The Girl Who Waited*, *The Wedding of River Song* and *A Town Called Mercy* all received a notable boost to their ratings after following on from *Strictly Come Dancing*, compared to episodes which had a lead-in from *Total Wipeout* (which usually had a rating of just three million). As we've seen, *Strictly* is capable of pulling in 11 million viewers – so surely that should be a huge benefit to *Doctor Who*, if there are already such a large number of people watching BBC One just before the Doctor comes on, right?

The trouble is, it's not just *Doctor Who* viewers who have altered their viewing habits. We're used to the idea of audiences timeshifting *Doctor Who* and catching up later, but the same is starting to be true of every other TV show too. So *Doctor Who* isn't *actually* inheriting an audience of 10 or 11 million from *Strictly Come Dancing*. Perhaps six or seven million might be watching *Strictly* live, with another couple of million watching it later that same evening. And when are those people watching it? Mostly between eight and 10 o'clock – *instead of Doctor Who!* So rather than being much of a help to *Doctor Who*, *Strictly* is actually proving to be *extra* competition – and that's on top of *The X Factor*!

These are tricky problems. As the TV landscape continues to mutate, and the way viewers consume television changes, schedulers need to get smarter to work out what will benefit all of their shows. The current BBC One schedule is a good one for *Strictly*, but less good for *Doctor Who*. Perhaps the solution is to move *Doctor Who* back to the spring for the next series, where it can hopefully shine a little brighter, and not be bruised in the battle between the biggest light entertainment shows on the box? Whatever happens, *Doctor Who* deserves a bit better... DWM

Galaxy FORUM

Your views on everything going on in the hectic world of *Doctor Who*…

As this issue went to press, viewers were still reeling from the shocking events of *Face the Raven*. More of that later… but first, your reactions to Peter Harness and Steven Moffat's recent two-parter, *The Zygon Invasion*/*The Zygon Inversion*…

After the Invasion

NATHAN STONEROCK EMAIL

There are a lot of things to like about *The Zygon Invasion*/*The Zygon Inversion*. Five rounds rapid. Peter Capaldi's dazzling smile. The return of Osgood. The evil Clara. But what really makes these two episodes among the best of the season is the scene in the Black Archive. Capaldi's performance is amazing! He carries the entire scene, and he does it magnificently – it's a BAFTA-winning performance. I hung on every word, and couldn't take my eyes off the screen.

■ **PAUL BOWLER** EMAIL

Proving itself to be anything but the "same old, same old", *The Zygon Inversion* is *Doctor Who* at its very best, and an exciting and tense conclusion to the two-part story. The taut script by Peter Harness and Steven Moffat skillfully plays on the issues of identity, trust and paranoia, while the story's deep philosophical core enables director Daniel Nettheim to gradually build this thought-provoking episode to a thrilling conclusion. *The Zygon Invasion* and *The Zygon Inversion* have all the hallmarks of classic *Doctor Who* and is without a doubt one of the best stories from this series so far!

Not all Zygons are out to kill us – a lesson for our times?

STAR LETTER

Radical Thoughts

■ **BILAL SADAQ (15)** EMAIL

I loved *The Zygon Invasion,* especially the allusions towards the problem with radicalisation in today's society. As a Muslim, I felt that this episode had a connection to the problems that our society is facing nowadays in Britain.

The video of Osgood in front of the Zygon flag instantly reminded me of captive videos sometimes seen on the news. Furthermore, when the Doctor said that bombing would radicalise them all, it really struck me and reminded me that he is a symbol of peace and security, making me think what he would say to our Middle East problems today.

Bilal's email wins him a copy of *Only the Monstrous*, a brand-new box set of three full-cast audio adventures starring John Hurt as the War Doctor. It's available now from Big Finish Productions at *www.bigfinish.com* price £20 on CD or to download.

DOCTOR WHO
THE WAR DOCTOR
ONLY THE MONSTROUS

■ **CHUCK HANSEN** ILLINOIS, USA

The scenes between Jenna Coleman as Bonnie the Zygon and Jenna Coleman as Clara are some of the most intense, suspenseful, distressing and humorous moments ever featured in *Doctor Who* in its 52-year history. To carry this one-on-one confrontation of two so-differing personalities, allowing the viewer to become effortlessly absorbed in the moment – completely oblivious that the same person is portraying both roles – is proof of what an incredible, brilliant and mesmerising actor Jenna Coleman is. While I will miss her greatly in my favourite television series, I know it won't be long until I see Jenna Coleman on screen again, be it on television or in the cinema. My best wishes for her continued success and a thank-you to her for her time and presence on *Doctor Who*.

■ **STEVE HIGGINS** FLORISSANT

Osgood's return in the Zygon story, especially in the second half, was handled brilliantly. I enjoyed all the references to whether or not this was the 'real' Osgood, human or Zygon, making it seem as if Osgood's answers were directed at pedantic viewers. However, she was clearly human. Remember how Osgood postulated in *The Day of the Doctor*, how the Zygon-Osgood's shoes must be Zygon, too? In this episode, Osgood's glasses came off, broke, and had to be repaired. That's a pretty obvious clue right there.

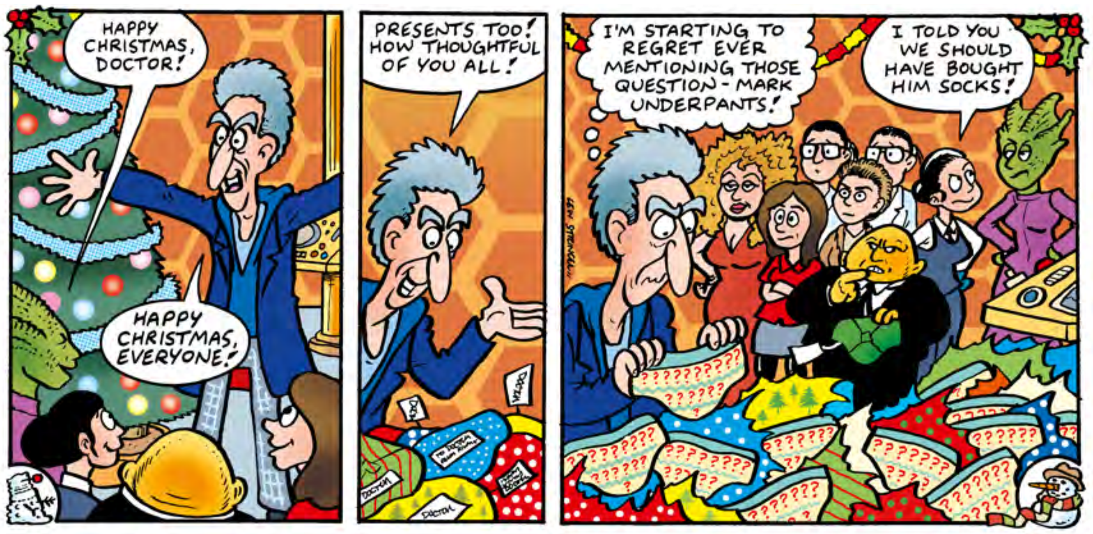
■ **CAPALDI CROMBIE** EMAIL

When growing up, there is a nagging fear of what it will be like when you become too old to feel from *Doctor Who* what you used to feel as a child. But in *The Zygon Inversion*, any such fear at the back of my mind was crushed by Peter Capaldi. The speech in the Black Archive, as hands hovered over the Osgood boxes, is perfectly pitched and performed. "And you know what you do with all that pain? Shall I tell you where you put it? You hold it tight. Until it burns your hand." Words to live by, and Capaldi's performance ensures that these words will remain etched into hearts and minds. There is a raw, savage lion's roar in the Doctor's voice as he channels his own personal agony to protect the peace between Zygons and humans by the skin of his teeth. I was moved to tears and clapped for a long time afterwards. We're very lucky to have Peter as the Doctor.

■ **JOSHUA STEVENS (15)** EMAIL

I am convinced that *The Zygon Invasion*/*The Zygon Inversion* will, in future, be regarded as one of the highlights of Peter Capaldi's time as the Doctor. The plot follows on perfectly, not just from *The Day of the*

The Daft Dimension by Lew Stringer


HAPPY CHRISTMAS, DOCTOR!
HAPPY CHRISTMAS, EVERYONE!
PRESENTS TOO! HOW THOUGHTFUL OF YOU ALL!
I'M STARTING TO REGRET EVER MENTIONING THOSE QUESTION-MARK UNDERPANTS!
I TOLD YOU WE SHOULD HAVE BOUGHT HIM SOCKS!
LEW STRINGER

SEND YOUR LETTERS TO... Galaxy Forum, **Doctor Who Magazine**, Brockbourne House, 77 Mount Ephraim, Tunbridge Wells, Kent, TN4 8BS. **Email:** dwm@panini.co.uk (marked 'Galaxy Forum' in the subject line), or log on to **Twitter** and tweet us at www.twitter.com/dwmtweets

Doctor, but also *Dark Water/Death in Heaven*, with the character of Osgood used brilliantly at the centre of it.

The Osgood Box concept is ingenious, and the speech it provokes from the Doctor (on how war is a waste of life) is one of the show's greatest moments of all time. Capaldi delivers it superbly, making it really affect the audience. And the way this story reflected on current world issues is extraordinary; it manages, perfectly, to persuade the viewer to take a step back and look at all the silly little situations that we, as both humanity and individuals, get ourselves into. At the end of the day, it seems to tell us, we need to work together to survive, and cross the barriers of race and culture. This story is not only an exciting urban thriller and alien adventure, but a device that encourages us to reflect on what is happening in our world.

■ **BOB RASHLEY** BRISTOL
I was totally blown away by *The Zygon Inversion*. Its themes hit the pulse of what is going on right now. That innocent unmasked Zygon wanting to just live among humans in peace made me mindful of the current refugee crisis, and the themes of war and sacrifice struck a chord with me watching it the day before Remembrance Sunday. And that speech. It made me do something I've never done before. It made me pity the Doctor. Here is this character I have known and loved for a long time; with each word I could feel the emotional agony in his voice. Thank you, Mr Capaldi, and bravo!

Peter's big speech.

■ **LEIGH WOOD** EMAIL
The Zygon two-parter was perfect. As well as deft performances all round (without exception), the direction, production and writing were excellent. Has there ever been a strong run of stories as consistent as this which this season has given us? Peter Capaldi has arrived this year – long may Doctor John Basil Disco (*aka* Doctor Funkenstein) reign!

■ **PHIL JOHNSON** EMAIL
I have to communicate how magnificent Peter Capaldi is in *The Zygon Inversion* – what a speech, what a performance! I thought last year was average, but Mr Capaldi is now up there with Troughton, Pertwee and Baker. He's now my equal favourite Doctor. Amazing. Extraordinary. An artist. A true great!

■ **AIMEE MORRIS** EMAIL
In the brilliant *The Zygon Invasion* the Doctor mentions having question mark underwear. Of course, with the Eighth Doctor being my favourite Doctor, I instantly thought of the **DWM** story *The Glorious Dead*, were he boasts a nice pair of question mark boxers! Shout out, or just good luck?

■ **IAN SUMMERDALE** EMAIL
As much as I enjoyed the Zygon two-parter, I was concerned at the apparent political naïvety of the Doctor's actions. It's entirely possible he's left Earth's security in the hands of two Zygons – both former terrorists, one of which, Bonnie, showed no remorse at all for the murder of both humans and her own kind. It'd be like handing over the peace of the real world to two members of ISIS – not very sensible, to say the least!

■ **SIMON DARLEY** EMAIL
Let's see... Hero working with a secret organisation. Enemies seeking to render the planet uninhabitable to all but a chosen few. Secret gadget disguised as an ordinary pair of sunglasses. Emphasis on eyebrows. A pre-credits teaser with said hero utilising a Union Jack parachute. I was wrong – it's not William Hartnell that Peter Capaldi is turning into, it's Roger Moore! How long before he replies with the words "Doctor. The Doctor"? As I've said before, 'nobody does it better!'

Wake Up Call!

■ **JACOB LOCKETT** EMAIL
Sleep No More made me sleep no more! What a dementedly terrifying episode! The found-footage aspect of the story was inspired and made every little second scary and pulse-racing. And those Sandmen! Every time those gruesome creatures wreaked havoc, I ran behind the sofa and tried not to wet my trousers! Then there was that spine-chilling ending, where Reece Shearsmith's character warns the audience that they all might turn into monsters too. That was harrowing stuff! Trust me, I'm not going to show this episode to any of my relatives anytime soon. Who knows what will happen?

Sleep No More – harrowing stuff!

■ **HOLLY H** CLACTON-ON-SEA
I think *Sleep No More* was a great episode! Watching everything through the eyes of the characters was so different and interesting, it was almost like you were there with them. I liked that bits of the story were missing, it meant that you could use your imagination to fill in the blanks (which is also the reason that some people didn't like it). This episode certainly hasn't been given the credit it deserves. I think sometimes people take the show a little bit too seriously and miss out when it comes to fun episodes like this!

■ **PETER THORPE** EMAIL
It took me completely by surprise that Mark Gatiss has written the weakest script of the season so far. What the hell is going on? The story really didn't go anywhere. The only things that were great were the special effects and the actors involved. Come on, Mark, you can do better than this usually. *The Unquiet Dead* was simply awesome. I'm not panning the whole episode. I do like every episode no matter what, but there are moments ►

WE ALSO HEARD FROM...

Get in touch via your mobile or on Twitter!

TEXTS!

■ **STEVE HARDY** Reading **DWM**'s *Fact of Fiction* on *The War Games* I've just realised that 'wearable tech' was already being shown off over 40 years ago!

■ **NICHOLAS WILLIS** How about getting *The Doctor Who Years* tapes onto DVD? I know Colin Baker is keen to see them out.

■ **DAVID PERRY** Having now learnt Harry Sullivan was a potential mass murderer, what next? Will we learn that Victoria Waterfield was a pole dancer?!

■ **DAVID WEBB** Jenna Coleman looks so hot in that waitress outfit. But then, she looks hot in anything!

Thanks, everybody, for sending us your texts over the last few years. This service has now ended, so please *don't* send us any more text messages – we won't receive them, but you may still be charged. You can, of course, continue to contact us via email or Twitter.

TWEET US!

@paul_scoones Loving **DWM** 493. Bethany Black would be wonderful to chat to about *Doctor Who*.

@mikehall314 Perversely proud that **DWM** started six years before *FHM*, and outlived it *#nerdpride*

@The_BeeSting Politicians & terrorists alike should watch *The Zygon Invasion* and *The Zygon Inversion* again, just for the Doctor's speech

@GWReport I told people my Halloween costume was a Zygon duplicate of myself.

@ChrisWatt4 Had a fantastic day at the *Doctor Who* Festival. Great to meet the **DWM** team and see Peter Capaldi and Michelle Gomez.

Tweet us at *@DWMtweets*, and add *#dwmgalaxy* to your tweet, if you want to be included in the next issue...

Most Dedicated DOCTOR WHO Fan Ever! *of the month*

Meet the fans who go further than most to show their love for the Doctor...

■ **SAMANTHA SAXBY** EMAIL
When my sister found out that the *Doctor Who* Experience had a licence, my fiance, Anthony, and I got in touch with them. The manager, Brad Kelly, was more than helpful. We got married on Saturday 24 October at 5pm. When guests arrived they were directed to the upstairs exhibition to look around until it was time to go downstairs for the ceremony. As I walked to Anthony with my dad, the song *Doctorin' the TARDIS* by The Timelords was played. My son, Jacob Hawes, read a paragraph from *Rose*. It went like clockwork!

■ Incredible! Are you as dedicated a fan as Samantha and Anthony? If so, then send your story and pictures to the usual address...

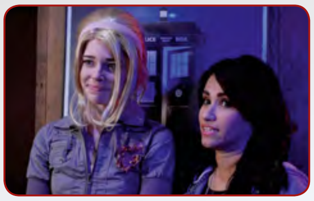
The new Mr and Mrs Saxby take their first trip in the TARDIS together.

Photo by Christian Gallagher.

WHO TUBE

This month's pick of the *Doctor Who*-related videos doing the rounds

■ In aid of the BBC's Children in Need appeal, Harry Hill takes viewers on a whirlwind tour of the history of telly – including, of course, *Doctor Who*!
Go to: **tinyurl.com/TVHarry**



■ *Tenspotting*, starring Chloe Dykstra, is a romantic comedy set at a *Doctor Who* convention, in which a young woman searches for her perfect '10'. It's superb!
Go to: **tinyurl.com/Tenspotting**

■ Get into the festive spirit with the 2014 *Doctor Puppet* Christmas Special... and hope that Santa brings us a new episode in the very near future!
Go to: **tinyurl.com/puppet2014**

■ The Ninth Doctor returns! Well, sort of. Christopher Eccleston takes on the grim reaper's cavalry as he introduces the music of Wagner to younger viewers.
Go to: **tinyurl.com/EcclesRide**

■ Frank Skinner chats to his guest Zoe Ball, and, at 13'50", explains with a passion why everyone should watch the Doctor's speech in *The Zygon Inversion*.
Go to: **tinyurl.com/FrankZygons**

◄ when I don't get what's going on. I usually do but the episode just wasn't gelling with me, and the actors who kept looking at the camera was just so distracting.

■ **RICK ORMROD** EMAIL
Sleep No More is probably the most ironic title in *Who* history because sleep is exactly what I did, falling asleep during the story. This has never happened to me in my 42 years of watching *Doctor Who*. From the start the story failed to engage my attention and I was disappointed after having had such high expectations of a really good script from the usually excellent Mark Gatiss. After a consistent run of excellent stories this one was a real letdown. Maybe I should watch it again and give it another chance? To be honest, life is too short!

■ **JASON TENNANT** GREENWICH
Can we take a moment to look at the hugely divisive episode that is *Sleep No More*? I understand the naysayers, and the praise it has received, but so far I feel that everyone has overlooked the most wonderful thing to happen on *Doctor Who*. We became Clara for a few shining moments and we became the Doctor's companion, watching Peter Capaldi speak to us with raw passion and I, for one, felt like I was running with the Doctor and I had hoped it would never end. My 11-year-old self got ready to see all of time and space, and it was wonderful. It's astonishing how 52 years later, we still find new ways of exploring the universe with the greatest Time Lord of all! Happy birthday, *Doctor Who*. Keep on surprising us.

The ramifications of Clara's decision begin to sink in...

The Bird of Death

■ **MARK HOLDING** EMAIL
I don't tend to get emotional about *Doctor Who* these days. I cared not when Amy and Rory got time-locked in New York, and my heart was untouched at the demise of Danny Pink. However, it appears my emotions have not been deleted after all, with the brave passing of Clara Oswald in *Face the Raven* having me and my eight-year-old Rosie sharing brave cuddles and choked reassurances. A beautiful script, stunningly played and amazingly directed.

■ **JAMES VICKERY** EMAIL
I thought *Face the Raven* was the best episode of the series so far! But that's my opinion from a slightly heartless perspective. From a more human point of view, I am upset. Clara's death with the beautiful music and the silent scream was the saddest way a companion has left since Rose Tyler was trapped in a parallel universe. The writing, production, storyline and acting were flawless, and the episode as a whole was the best *Doctor Who* has been for quite a while.

■ **DENISE KILPATRICK** EMAIL
Wow, *Doctor Who* really dropped the ball with *Face the Raven*. They had a wonderful companion who was idolised by little girls all over the world because she was smart, daring, strong, and not intimidated by the Doctor. Then when it's time for her to leave in *Face the Raven*, they have her die precisely *because* she was daring, strong and trying to do what the Doctor does. What a terrible message that sends. They should be ashamed!

■ **DEAN BELANGER** EMAIL
After more than 800 episodes, countess audios, comics and novels, *Doctor Who* continues to surprise and be original. I looked around the room as our four children aged from 12 to 21 watched *Face the Raven* and I saw tears, joy and awe. What other show does this? Thanks to the production team for entertaining our family and for the myriad of emotions felt as we watched our beloved Clara die. As 'To be continued' flashed across the screen, my 15-year-old daughter looked at me and said "What? Is she gone? Is she really? Daddy, is she dead?" I answered that I guess we'll find out next week, and for the first time – in a world of spoilers – I didn't really know the answer! *That's* why I love this show. You never *really* know what's going to happen next...

And what happened next will be discussed next month! Until then, have a very Merry Christmas! **DWM**

On This Month...
15 YEARS AGO

It's 2000, and in **DWM** 299, future TV writers are much in evidence...

Mark the Roboman!

■ In the year 2000, it was still possible (just!) to count the number of *Doctor Who* audio dramas released by Big Finish using only your fingers and toes. **DWM** 299 previewed the latest adventure: *The Mutant Phase*, a Dalek story by Nicholas Briggs and starring Peter Davison. Appearing in two small roles was Mark Gatiss, a *Doctor Who* fan who had found fame with *The League of Gentlemen*. "I'm playing Karl, a Russian from sometime in the future, and a Southern American Roboman," Mark told **DWM**. "Well, it's Peter Davison and the Daleks, so I couldn't say no!"

One for the furnace?

■ Meanwhile, as The Time Team continued its ongoing mission with *The Underwater Menace*, reader Rob Shearman of London voiced his opinion of Episode 3, the only part of the story still known to exist: "Absolutely bloody dreadful. Quite possibly the only episode saved from junking at the Archives which should be taken out and burned anyway. Everything about it is stupid. The writing is stupid. The direction is stupid – especially the Fish People scenes, which actually define stupidity." Years later, Rob would be rather more generous in his assessment, when he considered the merits of the story on the DVD release!

You've got to love that penguin...

■ It would be five years before Rob's episode, *Dalek*, hit the screens, but in 2000, his first professional *Doctor Who* story appeared: *The Holy Terror*, a full-cast audio drama from Big Finish. Available on CD or double-cassette tape, the adventure starred Colin Baker as the Sixth Doctor and Robert Jezek as Frobisher – a shapeshifting penguin who first appeared in **DWM**'s comic strip. Reviewing the audio, **DWM**'s Vanessa Bishop wrote: 'Shearman has written, without a doubt, Big Finish's best script, and *The Holy Terror* is the company's first really quotable production.'

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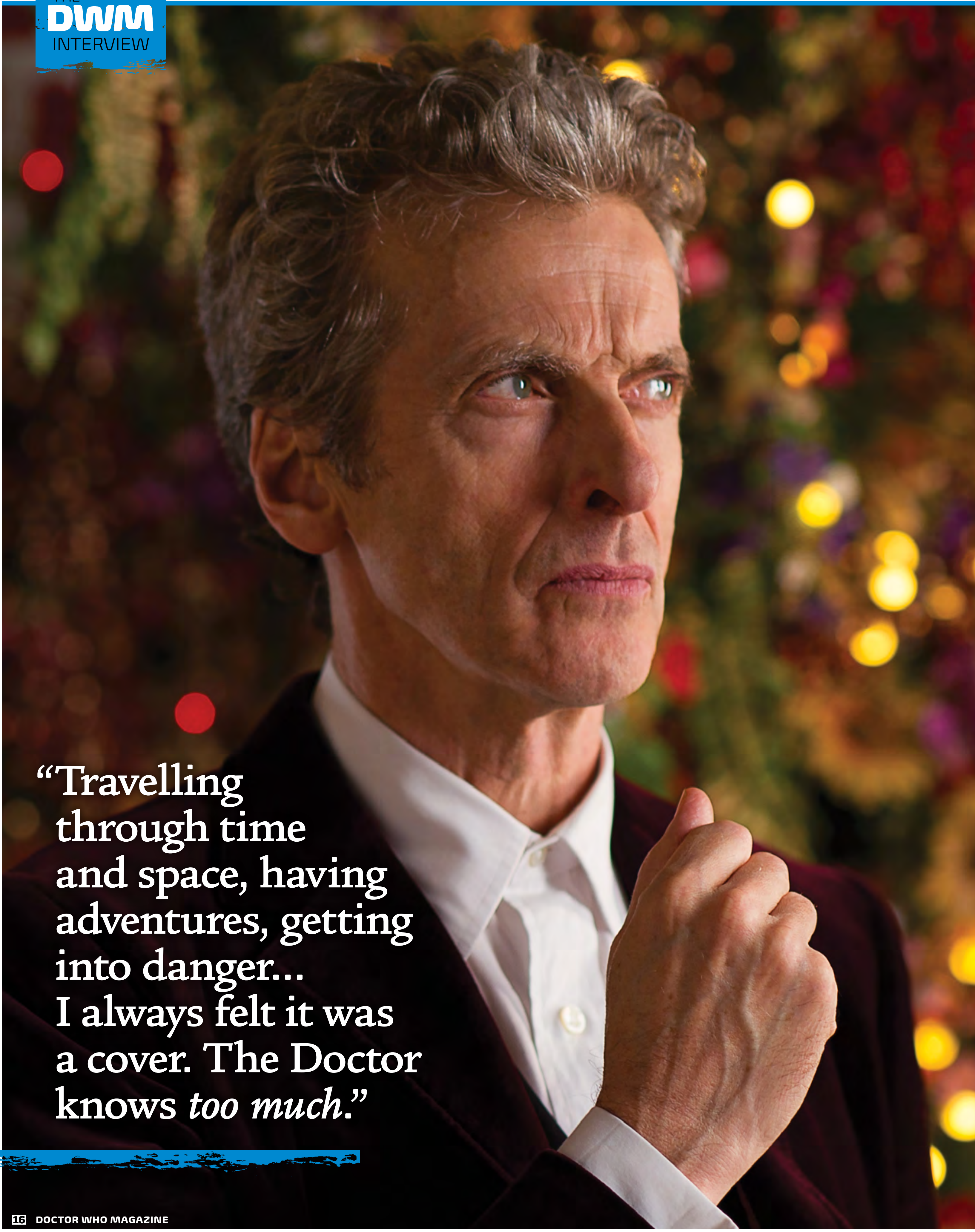


"Travelling through time and space, having adventures, getting into danger... I always felt it was a cover. The Doctor knows *too much.*"

The Doctor & ME

At the end of his second year of adventures as Doctor Who, Peter Capaldi contemplates Christmas – and life without Clara Oswald...

INTERVIEW BY **BENJAMIN COOK**

It's five minutes to Hell on a warm Tuesday evening, and the Doctor and Me are doing precisely what any of us would do if we were still around at the end of the universe: debating *Doctor Who* continuity. Gotta love them story arcs. "The Hybrid is supposed to be half Time Lord, half Dalek," insists the one and only Me.

"No, it isn't," argues the Doctor. He has his own, *better* theory: "Blah, blah, Daleks, blah, blah, Time Lords. Humans and the Mire, both warrior races, fits perfectly." Spoken like a true fan.

Me shoots him a look as if to say "You've spent too long on the internet forums, mate," though what she actually says is, "Then I go on and on about who the Hybrid could be, I say it could be you, and –"

"I walk to here, and say something else. Blah, blah, blah. And then we have some chittery-chattery about Me."

"And I turn around – hey, can I move this vine on the floor? – and I say something about... something. It makes perfect sense, and you know it."

Don't worry, this isn't *Doctor Who*'s latest innovation: an entirely improvised episode. Nor has there been a budget cut. Scriptwriter Steven Moffat hasn't been exterminated. No, this is Peter Capaldi and Maisie Williams 'blocking' a scene from this year's series finale, *Hell Bent* – rehearsing their movements, to give the crew a sense of how to light the set and position the cameras. **DWM** is here too (at the end of everything, you must expect the company of immortals), watching the universe burn. Depending on your point of view, it's either mid-September 2015 and we're on a soundstage in Cardiff, or it's the end of everything and we're lurking in Gallifrey's vast, vine-covered Cloisters, now ruined and impossibly ancient. There are armchairs here, and a chess set, and a Dalek ("Exterminate... Me..."), and Time Lord Sliders riding around on segway boards. Are they all the rage? Not when a silver, cylindrical space-time ship – a TARDIS in its basic form! – stands in the corner. Who needs a hoverboard when you can steal a TARDIS and run away?

The Doctor (Peter Capaldi)...

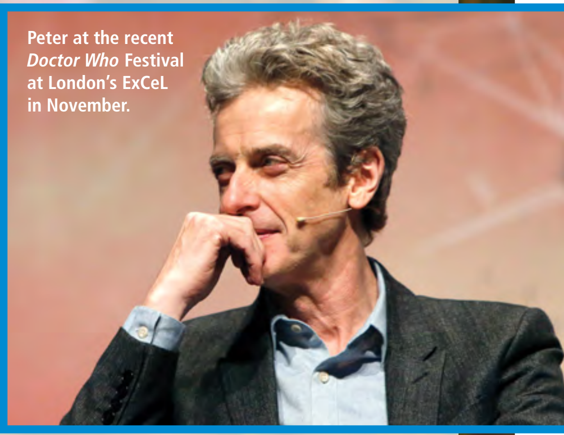
... and Ashildr (Maisie Williams) – the last person left at the end of the universe.

"It'll soon be Halloween," muses Peter. He's done blocking now and is chilling in one of the armchairs.

"What are you going to dress up as?" Maisie asks him.

"Doctor Who!"

Maisie can't top that. "I'm going to make a pumpkin Cyberman," she reasons. This is Maisie's last day on *Doctor Who*. Next week, she returns to shoot Season Six of HBO's *Game of Thrones*, in which she has played Arya Stark since 2011. "I'm going to miss you all," she says.



Peter at the recent *Doctor Who* Festival at London's ExCeL in November.

"We'll miss you too, Maisie," says Peter. "But just think of all the conventions you can do now. *Doctor Who*. *Game of Thrones*. You don't get this with *Call the Midwife*." True that.

Flashforward a couple of months. In a north London photo studio, Peter is striking a pose for the cover of one of *Radio Times*' many Christmas issues. (We've lost count of how many. There seem to be more every year.) There's a TARDIS here, too, disguised as a police box (none of your silver, cylindrical crafts here), and Christmas decorations, and fake snow. *Lots* of fake snow, everywhere. Half of it in Peter's thick, grey hair. Earlier today, he did some roundtable interviews with Her Majesty's press, to promote *Doctor Who*'s current season – at the time of talking, the first half of the Zygon two-parter aired last weekend, so there are five, thrilling episodes still to come – as well as the upcoming Christmas Special, *The Husbands of River Song* [see preview, page 22]. This afternoon, Peter is shooting something super secret for **DWM**'s 500th issue. We could tell you what, but we'd have to kill you... with the sidearm of the **DWM** editor's personal security. (There ►

Peter enjoyed working on *The Zygon Inversion*, which dealt with some real-world themes.

> "To reflect the real world is a very good thing. Particularly as a lot of young people find the real world bewildering."

◄ isn't a stun setting.) But first, while everyone else nips off for lunch, Peter stays behind with **DWM**, for a bit of a chinwag.

"I've had a knee operation," he explains, as we sit down on a sofa in the corner of the studio, "which is why this knee's being a bit – ow – tricky. I had it done about three weeks ago. I was on crutches. The crutches have gone now." He has a walking stick, though he barely seems to need it. "I'm on the mend," he says. "This is a vast improvement on last week. I should be fine. This is the same injury that Matt Smith had," he stresses, "when I met him for the first time."

It's the *Doctor Who* injury?

"Ha, I think it is." He shakes his head in laughter, sprinkling snow all over the sofa. It looks like he has... "Dandruff? Ha!" he smiles. Back to his knee: "It's running down corridors and pivoting, to turn to the camera – that's what does it. Actually, I'm sure I got it on *The Zygon Invasion*, chasing after the Zygons after they plucked the little girls out of the playground." Talking of which...

This year's Zygon two-parter was as overtly political as *Doctor Who* has ever been, tackling immigration, assimilation, Islamophobia, ISIS, and the legitimacy of violence, amongst other issues. It was *Doctor Who* as a polemic, of the like rarely seen since, probably, the Third Doctor's era. "I think it's a thing we should do more of," says Peter. "I like the way that the Doctor adopts a very definite moral stance, which not everyone may agree with, but it becomes very clear when he's faced with more, if you like, 'political' issues.

"Like you, I can remember *Doctor Who* having an awareness of real-world issues, and it made the show deeper and richer," he continues. "It's been somewhat lost since the show came back. I suppose a lot of effort has been put into just making sure the show work. But to actually reflect the current world that the show has been broadcasting to is a very good thing. Particularly as there are a lot of young people watching who may find the world bewildering. *I* find the world bewildering. So it's quite useful to have somebody's take on it, even if that person happens to be a two-and-a-half-thousand-year-old Gallifreyan."

Last year, the show was preoccupied with the question of whether the Doctor is a good man. **DWM**'s reaction – all too often screamed at the TV screen – was, "Of course you are! How can you doubt it?" Was Peter as confident?

"Regeneration is a difficult process," he considers. "It 'projects', if you like, the being of the Doctor into a new body, with a new consciousness, and that consciousness has to try to understand the new being. Not only does he look in the mirror and see a new face, but he has to wake up to the history of this being, and the actions and decisions that he has made, and what effect those decisions had on people. It must be like waking up as this new old person. You have a whole history there, which is yours, but also it's new to you, and my Doctor was a little freaked out, I think, by his stature, by what he'd done, by where he'd been, which threw him into questioning his own morality. He needed to be reassured that the person he had become was a good man. It's about a struggle to know yourself, and we've all felt that, I think, to a degree."

You may think Peter's "whole bunch of new cruel people" speech in *The Zygon Inversion* defined his Doctor, and you'd be right, but his virtuoso outing in *Heaven Sent* – and, in *Hell Bent*, the raw, righteous anger that permeates his performance as a Doctor who's broken every code he's ever lived by – ensures Peter's place amongst the pantheon of greatest Doctor Whos ever. If he isn't nominated for a BAFTA for this latest run of episodes, there ain't no justice in the world. Does Peter feel that his portrayal has come into its own this year? Does he feel that he knows the character better?

"I think that it's a constantly developing thing," he answers. "With each season or each episode, individual writers will have slightly different takes on the character, which reveals new, interesting things to me. But the character is not knowable. I can't tell you who Doctor Who is, or 'he would do this', or 'he wouldn't do that'... He predates me, but I use a lot of myself, as I think all of the actors have; as all actors do anyway. He doesn't seem more revealed to me. But then, I don't seek that."

There's always more to discover about the Doctor?

Peter nods. (Cue more snowfall.) "I don't think it would be a good idea to know the Doctor. I mean, it would be a good idea to *meet* him and to know him, but I don't think as an actor there's a way of knowing him. That would be wrong." He pauses to dust the snow from his lap. "Does that answer your question, or is that just actor baloney? This year, we entered it thinking, 'The Doctor has struggled with getting to know his morality and the validity of the decisions that he's taken, so now, this series, he's going to have a good time. He's going to go out and really enjoy his position, really enjoy these gifts that have been given to him, of being able to travel through time and space, to explore the universe and history, have adventures, have fun, and be in danger.' But," he cautions, "I always felt that it was a cover. It's a deflection. The Doctor knows too much."

So he's *not* allowed to enjoy himself? The universe won't let him? Like, in the final three episodes of the series –

"The final three episodes," he jumps in, "kind of say, 'You know the Doctor who was in last year's series? He was right. He was right to question his morality' – which is fine, because that means, in the *next* series, he'll be a combination of those two different elements: the more questioning Doctor, and the warmer Doctor. It's constantly developing. I think Russell T [Davies, former showrunner] wrote a brilliant line [in 2005 episode *Rose*] when he had Christopher Eccleston say, 'I can feel the Earth turning. I can see everything that ever was, and everything that ever will be, and it drives me mad.' I'm paraphrasing. But if there's anything to know about the Doctor, it's that. He has the capacity to know what's going to happen to you, which would put a whole different..." He trails off. He's searching for an example. "If I knew that you were going to go out and step under a bus later today –"

You'd save **DWM**, right? You would.

"Well, I don't know."

Aw.

"That's what I mean. Having that knowledge –"

Doctor!!!

"No, *of course* I'd save you," he smiles, adding: "Because I'd want my article to come out." Charming. "But having that knowledge affects this moment, and the Doctor has that all the time. He has to be able to compartmentalise that, or you wouldn't be able to live and function if you opened yourself up to all of these strands of future and past." He considers this. "I'm very philosophical this afternoon."

Yes, and it's good. While we're at it, then, let's talk about the Doctor shooting the Time Lord General in *Hell Bent*. It's unusual to see the Doctor brandish a gun, let alone blast someone with it at point-blank range. Bold move?

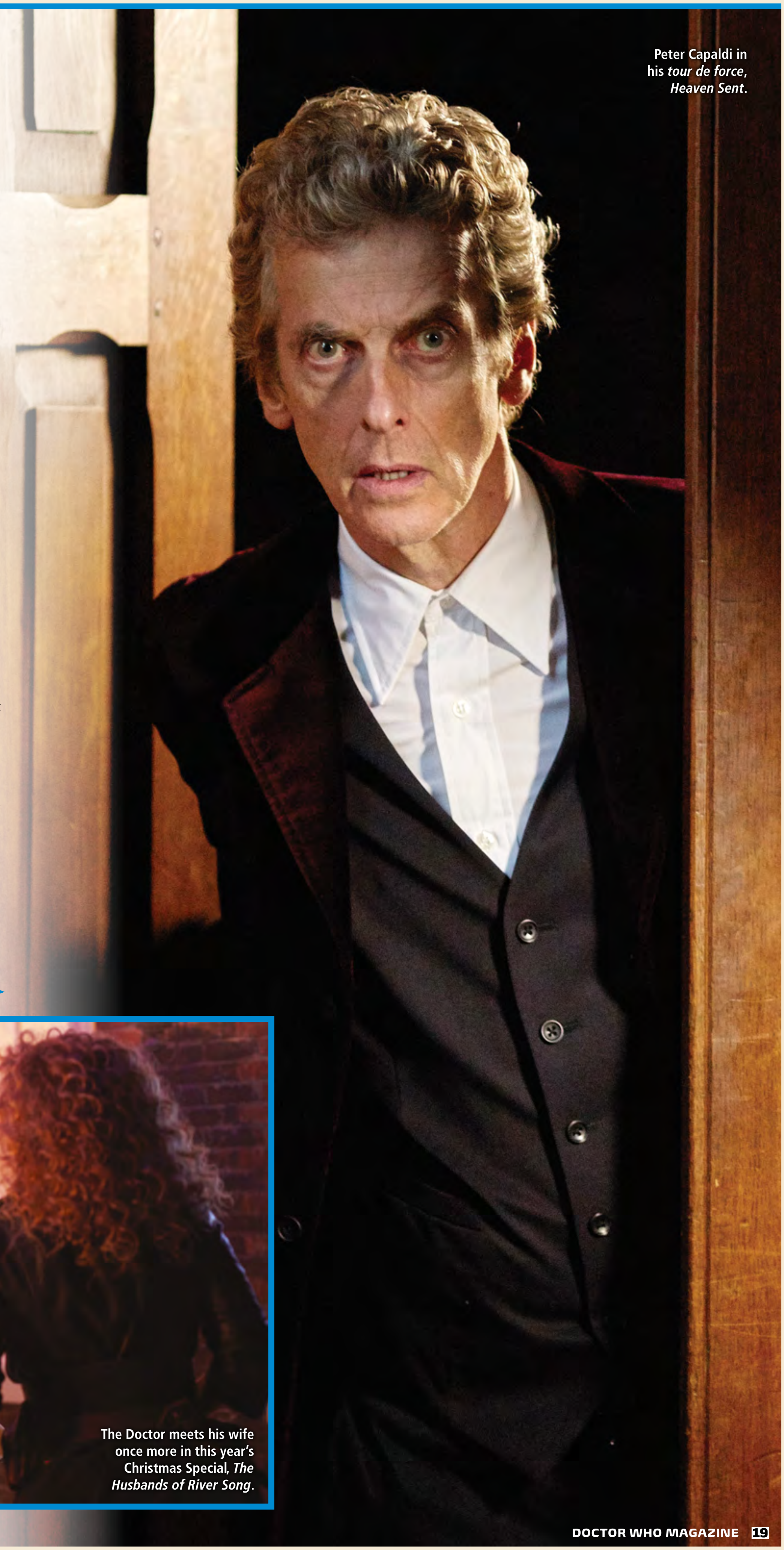
"Well, he knew what was going to happen," reasons Peter. "He's only triggering a regeneration, not really killing the General. He knows that's how it's going to fall, so I'm not sure it was *such* a difficult thing to do. Unpleasant, probably, for the General – like some surgical procedure or something that you don't want to go through – but ultimately it's because, at that point, Clara is more important to the Doctor than anything. It's an expression of his affection, his bond with Clara. But no, I don't like him running around with a gun all the time, shooting people. Ha, I don't think that's a great look for him."

How has travelling with Clara changed the Doctor? Or, if his memory of her was wiped in *Hell Bent*, maybe it hasn't.

"Well, I don't think he's forgotten Clara. I don't think he forgets *anyone*. But I think Clara didn't change him that much."

Really?

"He liked Clara, so he put up with her efforts to try to make him more amenable, but the way the ►



Peter Capaldi in his *tour de force, Heaven Sent*.

The Doctor meets his wife once more in this year's Christmas Special, *The Husbands of River Song*.

The memory of Clara drains from the Doctor's mind. Or does it...?

"I don't think he's forgotten Clara. I don't think he forgets *anyone*. But I think Clara didn't change him much."

story worked out... I think he probably thinks, 'You know what? I was right. I shouldn't have bothered to be nice to all those human beings!'" He laughs. "No, I think he's *probably* more pleasant to people. I never found him unpleasant, but I don't know, some people –"

Your Doctor isn't unpleasant, just... upfront?

"Hm, I mean, if you go back to Tom Baker or Jon Pertwee's Doctors, they're really quite spiky with people, so I don't quite know why I've got the rap for being difficult or distant or... maybe that's just because I came after Matt, or after David [Tennant]... even Chris' characterisation of the Doctor is not dissimilar from mine. The Doctor is impatient with people, and he won't put up with people he's not interested in. He doesn't have time to faff around. Probably if you were to examine it, that would be the more common character trait in Doctors – a spikiness and distance, as well as a kind of friendliness."

Asked how the relationship between the Doctor and River plays out in the Christmas Special – "is there as much flirting involved as with previous Doctor/River pairings?" we wonder – Peter explains: "There's a very different dynamic. As you'll see, she doesn't really know it's him at first. She can't be convinced that it is, so she's sort of not interested in him! He gets a taste of his own medicine, from her. She treats him very coldly, and flirts with a *lot* of other people in front of him. He doesn't get any flirting, which I think upsets him. Eventually – finally! – she recognises him. But then another element comes into play and... well, you'll have to wait and see. But it's fun. And how it concludes is rather strange. Steven keeps writing this so well: there's a kind of haunted quality that starts to appear. It's not me doing it consciously. There's almost a sense – and it's very clear to me in the River stuff – of some other thing going on, under the surface. What I mean is, there's always doom not too far away..."

It's well-documented that Peter is a long-time fan of *Doctor Who*. He was five when the show began. "I don't remember *Doctor Who* not being part of my life," he told **DWM** shortly after landing the role, "and it became a part of growing up, along with the Beatles, National Health spectacles, and fog. And it runs deep. It's in my DNA." Two years in, has playing the Doctor lived up to Peter's expectations?

"Oh, it's great fun," he beams. "Largely, it's fun – and so it should be – because it's light, it's warm, and I think that's part of *the show*'s DNA. I feel awful saying it, but every day is fun for me. Sorry, ha! Of course, people have decided... I mean, I was sitting talking to the journalists this morning... they're all the same, they basically think I spent my entire life mourning because I wasn't Doctor Who, and not having a life – not going out and being an actor." In truth, Peter drifted away from the show somewhat during the 1980s. "You get on with your life, don't you?"

But it's clear that the show's earlier eras, the ones Peter grew up with, still mean a great deal to him. Steven has even started referencing his leading man's fan credentials in the stage directions. One, in Steven's script for *Hell Bent*, reads: 'The Doctor is flying around the classic console, like a distinguished Scottish actor who's slightly too excited for his own good.' Later in this issue, director Rachel Talalay describes Peter walking onto the William Hartnell-era TARDIS set for the first time as "the most magical moment... fandom heaven!" That can't have been just another day at work...?

"No day on *Doctor Who* is 'another day at work'," insists Peter. "That's why I'm acutely aware of the finite nature of it. There is no other job in television like this. When it's time for me to go, I'm not going onto something similar; there will never be *anything* similar to this. It's a one-off. To go onto the TARDIS, that TARDIS, was wonderful. Everybody loved it, and it looked amazing. Even though there were Ikea cutlery trays screwed to the wall, to make it look futuristic! On screen, it looks amazing. It was just so right. It still works. It still looks amazing. I loved it. Obviously there's a lot of nostalgia involved, but aesthetically it's just a very pure and satisfying design – echoed, of course, in

The Doctor arrives at the diner – just in time for a story...

the modern TARDIS. Yeah, some of the best days were spent on that set. It was great."

He's keen to stress, however, that he has to treat *Who* seriously as an acting job, too. "Being a *Doctor Who* fan doesn't give you a get-out-of-jail-free card. You can't coast with it. In fact, you have to be *more* responsible. I've very conscious of that." He cites *In the Loop*, the 2009 Academy Award-nominated British movie in which he reprised his role as spin-doctor Malcolm Tucker from BBC TV comedy *The Thick of It*. One of Peter's co-stars in Malcolm's big-screen outing, James Gandolfini (playing US General George Miller), had portrayed Tony Soprano in HBO series *The Sopranos*, one of Peter's other all-time favourite TV shows. "I'm sitting in a rehearsal room, and Tony Soprano walks in! James! And James and I have to work together. Armando [Iannucci], who directs it, loves to improvise, and he wants a scene where James and I, our characters, get into a fight. We have to improvise it, and it's a really raging kind of screaming match that we end up having. I thought, 'I can't be a fanboy here. I've got to put that to one side, and commit myself entirely to acting this part and being in this scene with James. Forget Tony Soprano. Let's just be actors.' It's rather like that on *Doctor Who*. You have to just do your work, which is not being a fanboy; it's being an actor –"

He stops, suddenly. He's worried. "But that makes it sound too serious." He changes tack: "I think being a fan allows you to trust your instincts a little bit more, about the more 'cosmic' elements. People don't have to explain *Doctor Who* to me. I have a relationship with the show. I have my own sense of the character and of the programme, which is quite rich and, *y'*know, earned. I've put in the hours! Sometimes when we're a little bit cornered – and by that I mean running out of time, or not quite finding whatever it is that's going on in the scene – I can take a leap in the dark, because I know the show. I can deploy that. The character is a mystery, but the show is *in* me, it comes with me, so I can release it. I can let it out."

Previous Doctors – David and Matt in particular – have spoken of how, from the moment they were cast, they were asked again and again when they were going to leave. It's enough to give a guy a complex. So we weren't going to ask Peter that – besides, he's already signed for another year – except, he brings it up himself: "I'm shocked at the speed at which it's going," he says. "I've done 26 episodes already, and I don't know how that happened. I'm amazed that people ask me all the time, when am I going? It makes you feel very unwelcome! 'Please, when are you leaving?' Or… someone said this morning, 'You're only doing six episodes next year, because you're too tired?' or some rubbish like this. I don't know where they've made this stuff up from. Six episodes?! That's not what I'm contracted to do. And I would do 20 episodes if they let me. I could do *Doctor Who* all the year round, quite happily."

He persists, "*Doctor Who* used to not be a show that was about the actor changing. When I was growing up, it was still a novelty when Patrick Troughton changed into Jon Pertwee, and when Jon Pertwee changed into Tom Baker. These were huge, strange novelties, so the idea now that that's just what the show does – like in *Casualty*, when people go and have an accident, they're taken to hospital – it's a little bit depressing, I think. So how long am I going to stay? I don't know how long."

You could just, I don't know, stay forever? Oh, go on!

"That's very kind of you," he smiles. "Bless you. I doubt that anyone can be Doctor Who forever. Then again…" And with that, he leaves us hanging. Surely not? Hey, come back!

Oh, he like a cliffhanger, doesn't he? **DWM**

STEVEN MOFFAT ON…

What happens post-Clara?

… the fallout from Clara's death in *Face the Raven*:

"I knew that Clara died at the end of Episode 10, so I was thinking, 'What am I going to do?' If you come back on next week and, inevitably and properly, the Doctor gets involved in another adventure, he just looks callous. Remember, all those years ago, *Time-Flight* [1982] taking off after *Earthshock* [*the preceding serial, in which – spoiler alert – the Doctor's companion Adric dies – Ed*]? You have to do it, there isn't a bloody choice, because it's *Doctor Who*, but it does seem a little bit on the brutal side. At least give him a month off! Episode 11 [*Heaven Sent*] is about grief. The Doctor is desperately upset, incredibly low, just about as low as you can throw him down, because he's lost his best friend. It's a *Doctor Who* take on grief; the Doctor breaking free from it."

… the show's first ever single-hander, *Heaven Sent*:

"I've never had a problem with people talking to themselves. People always say, 'Human beings don't do that.' Yes, they bloody do. I talk to myself all day. I make surprised reactions. I say, 'Oh, that's interesting,' on my own. It's an effort *not* to talk to yourself in the street, I find. In Episode 11, the Doctor doesn't have anyone to grandstand in front of. He's not pretending that he knows what's going on. He's not bluffing anyone. He can't. He doesn't have that wonderful distraction of worrying about somebody else. He's just there. Who are you if you've no-one to perform to? In the moment in the episode where the monster is nearly upon him, I think it's almost a relief for the Doctor, because he can be clever. He can at least respond to something. Putting him in that situation exposes the workings – takes the back off the Time Lord, and looks at all the wires, I suppose. [Laughs] Wires! Listen to me. Like Time Lords have wires.

"There's a style of thought – that's rarely been in the show, I have to say – that presents the Doctor as a sort of mythical, mighty sorcerer, which is what he can *appear* to be, but he's not. He's emotionally, and in many ways physically, fairly ordinary. It takes a lot of ordinary human effort for him to be amazing; it's something he works at. Well, maybe 'ordinary' is the wrong word, but… he isn't a superhuman. That's always interesting about the Doctor. We all know he's a man who stole a time machine, which he took ages to learn how to drive. He has no plan B. His bravery is a consequence of the fact he's as scared as anybody else."

… the Doctor's return to Gallifrey in *Hell Bent*:

"In a line that I cut from Episode 12, the General says to Clara, 'You don't know anyone till you see them at home.' Well, here the Doctor is at home, among his own people. The thing I kept worrying about was, what happens when he lands back on Gallifrey? He would have his own agenda. The hero rides back into town. Last time, he saved the day, so what's he here for this time? He's here entirely selfishly. He thinks he's entitled. 'Four-and-a-half billion years punching a diamond wall, and you've killed my mate. SCREW YOU!'

"He has a sort of rotating memory of everything that happened in Episode 11. Billions of years he's had that in his head. I think he has a good case to say that he's entitled to take something for himself. And he does. Obviously, because it's that kind of story, he's roundly punished for – whatever you call that – his fall from grace. Of course, the Doctor turns out to be fine, and the worst thing he does is demonstrate that he can turn Ken Bones [playing the General's tenth incarnation] into T'Nia Miller."

… shooting the General:

"Every time the Doctor comes to Gallifrey, other Times Lords have died, but they haven't regenerated – and it's always annoyed me, so I was just like, 'Let's do it.' The Doctor has to make a choice. 'Oh well, sod it, you're going to regenerate anyway.' It's something I've always wanted to do."

It's a reminder, too, that the Doctor will surely regenerate into a woman one day?

"Yes, it will happen. *Doctor Who* fans have been talking about this for years, but the general audience has not. By the end of this series, the general audience will be saying, 'Why is he always a man?' That question will properly have been raised, because it's now been done prominently, with nobody making a fuss about it. No-one makes a fuss about the General changing gender. Last year, the Doctor barely reacted at all to the fact that the Master is now a woman. He doesn't seem to regard it as of any consequence at all. Hoorah!"

Peter Capaldi records some gruelling scenes in *Heaven Sent*.

Ken Bones as the General's tenth incarnation.

The Husbands of River Song

This Christmas, the Doctor is reunited with his wife! Well, one of them, anyway. The only trouble is, she doesn't seem to know who he is...

PREVIEW BY **BENJAMIN COOK**

Now that the latest series has finished airing, you'd think that showrunner Steven Moffat might get to take a holiday. You'd be wrong. "I don't get a breather at all," he says. "I'm straight onto *Sherlock*." This is his 'other' BBC show, which he showruns with Mark Gatiss. A Victorian-set Christmas episode, *The Abominable Bride*, airs on New Year's Day. "Looking at next year, I've got 13 episodes of *Doctor Who* to make, three *Sherlocks*, and eight episodes of *Class* [BBC Three's new *Doctor Who* spin-off]. I think it's going to kill me. This time next year, I'll be talking to you from inside a box." He laughs, possibly through gritted teeth. "No, let's hope that's not true."

We're speaking to Steven about this December's *Doctor Who* Christmas Special, *The Husbands of River Song*, down the line from Melbourne – as if to prove how insanely busy he is – where, along with Peter Capaldi, Osgood actress Ingrid Oliver, and Seventh Doctor Sylvester McCoy, he's been a guest of honour at Australia's first *Doctor Who* Festival. While down under, Steven has been doing "an enormous amount of press." Today is his one day off. (Until **DWM** called.) How's he finding Melbourne?

"It seems very nice. It's really the first time I've been out in it." This is Steven's first day off in a very long while, and his last until Christmas. "I don't really have time to take any time off at Christmas. I haven't since I started. I take Christmas Day off, but I even go and bugger that up by putting *Doctor Who* on the telly, which does feel like a sort of responsibility."

Following Clara's departure in the final episodes of the 2015 series, and considering everything the Doctor went through in *Heaven Sent* and *Hell Bent*, *The Husbands of River Song* (note that matrimonial plural) is a shameless, downright glorious comedy episode. Back in the day, we'd have called it a romp. "That's exactly what it is," says Steven, who wrote it. "First of all, as it's the Christmas Special, we can't maintain the level of darkness that we had at the end of the last series, at all. We got really quite dark, and we really have to remind people, this Christmas, what this show is like normally. Also, we need to cheer up the Doctor. He was in a right old state by *Hell Bent*, so you sort of need someone proactive to come into his life, kick him up the arse, and remind him that he has a laugh sometimes. Being honest, I've no idea how it will play out. You know, we've the big, emotional ending of *Hell Bent*, and three weeks later it's, 'Oh, never mind, here's River!' But such is the nature of life and relationships, and there's always an element of that to *Doctor Who*, isn't there? The Doctor gets very, very sad, then he gets in his box, and he buggers off again. That's what he's like."

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A Christmas surprise for the Doctor!

This year's Special takes us to the weird and wonderful fifty-fourth century.

Despite the kicking up the arse and the larking about, *The Husbands of River Song* – directed by *Doctor Who* stalwart Douglas Mackinnon (*Listen, Flatline, Time Heist, etc*) – is a properly romantic episode. "Who doesn't love a love story?" reasons Steven. "You learn something huge about yourself when you discover who it is you've ended up being in love with. It's like being introduced to yourself when that happens." Alex Kingston is back as River Song, for the first time since 2013's *The Name of the Doctor* – although, this Christmas Special takes place before it, obviously; immediately after 2012 episode *The Angels Take Manhattan*), and it's not long before the Professor is rubbing the Doctor up the wrong way.

Steven says, "The Doctor *sort of* doesn't fall in love with people – and, on the other hand, sort ►

"You learn something huge about yourself when you discover who you've ended up being in love with. It's like being introduced to yourself when that happens."

STEVEN MOFFAT WRITER

We hope River can remember all 21 tumbler positions.

River takes the TARDIS for a joyride.

> “You could play River as a slightly badass lady version of the Doctor, but Alex didn’t go for that..”
>
> **STEVEN MOFFAT** **WRITER**

of does it all the time – so it’s quite surprising to drop him into a love story. But also, in the case of this one, it’s basically a mask story. River doesn’t recognise him! What’s your wife like when you’re not there? Or when she *doesn’t know* you’re there? Now, the entire audience is ahead of the Doctor on that. We’ve always known that River doesn’t behave herself when he’s not looking. But he’s sufficiently naïve in those matters to think that she probably does. I don’t think it comes as a surprise to anybody but him that she’s not precisely faithful, not precisely well-behaved, when the Doctor isn’t around.”

As it turns out, she nicks his TARDIS, and heads off on her own adventures! How’s that for misbehaving?

“I was really pleased with that,” confesses Steven. “I was having fun as I wrote it. But that got trumped when I thought, ‘Hang on, if he follows River into *his* TARDIS, and she doesn’t know who he is, he’s going to have to react...’” Yes, for the first time in the show, the Doctor gets his very own ‘It’s bigger! On the inside!’ scene. “He’s never had to do it,” laughs Steven, “and of course he kind of makes a hash of it, in attempting to do it properly. The Doctor being the Doctor, he just thinks, ‘Right, *watch*. Watch and learn. This is what you’re supposed to say.’ What we see in that moment is his outrage that everybody else has accepted the bigger-on-the-inside thing too soon. They all sort of go, ‘My God, it’s bigger on the inside,’ but he wants what to go, ‘No, no, stop! What you’ve just learned is really, utterly, fundamentally critical to the whole universe. Why don’t you see that? And now you’re commenting on my hairstyle – what are you doing?!’ When I realised that I could write that scene, because it comes up in the story, oh, that was a good moment. I think Peter was quite keen on that, too. We had a laugh.”

Watch out, too, for River’s brand new sonic device. Not a screwdriver. Something else. “Yeah, no, that was awesome,” says Steven, chuckling hard. “It only occurred to me recently, with all the hilarious nonsense over the sonic sunglasses, what a funny idea a sonic screwdriver is – that we’ve come to accept what was once, in the *Doctor Who* production office, Victor Pemberton [who wrote 1968 serial *Fury from the Deep*, in which the sonic screwdriver first appeared] sitting there saying, ‘Hang on, he doesn’t have a laser probe, he’s got a sonic screwdriver!’ They all burst out laughing and put it into the script, because it’s funny. A sonic screwdriver! That’s a ridiculous combination of words that we’ve become so used to that we don’t laugh at it anymore. So sonic sunglasses... and yes, River’s new sonic is outrageous. I mean, *what does it even mean?* It’s ridiculous, and brilliant.” And, whatever it is, you can be sure we’ll all be wanting one next Christmas.

After *The Name of the Doctor*, was it always clear to Steven that River’s story wasn’t complete – or does he keep ending it for real this time, then caving in and bringing her back?

“I thought it was probably over with *The Name of the Doctor*. I mean, I wasn’t sure, but I thought she had to have a farewell scene with Matt Smith, because they’ve had so many stories together, so I wrote that big ending for the two of them. But I knew we hadn’t done River’s *real* ending. It didn’t even bother me that we might never see it. There’s a whole load of stuff that the Doctor and River get up to that we never, ever see and never, ever should. There are adventures that we’ve never seen, and there are rows in restaurants. They’re probably king and queen of some island somewhere. We’re not going to join all the dots, because it loses all its fun if you do. You’ve got to think, ‘That stuff’s been going on, but that’s their business.’ The Doctor hasn’t deigned to tell his BBC biographers any of that story, because I think he’s faintly embarrassed by it.”

Asked to describes the relationship between River and Peter Capaldi’s Doctor, Steven replies: “Whichever Doctor, it’s fundamentally the same relationship. Each Doctor is different. They’re different sides of the same character. It’s almost like a different set of moods. This is the grumpy, reticent Doctor, I suppose – but then Matt Smith’s was quite often grumpy and reticent, so maybe, really, the Doctors aren’t as different as

The Doctor gets to see a whole new side of River...

Friday 25 December 2015 BBC one

BBC
DOCTOR WHO
2015 CHRISTMAS SPECIAL

WRITTEN BY Steven Moffat
DIRECTED BY Douglas Mackinnon
STARRING Peter Capaldi (the Doctor), Alex Kingston (River Song), Greg Davies (King Hydroflax), Phillip Rhys (Ramone), Matt Lucas (Nardole), Rowan Polonski (Flemming)

IN A NUTSHELL

It's Christmas Day 5343, on the remote human colony of Mendorax Dellora, and the Doctor is hiding from Christmas carollers and comedy reindeer antlers. But when a crashed spaceship calls upon the Doctor for help, he finds himself recruited into River Song's squad, and hurled into a fast, frantic chase across the galaxy – pursued by River's new husband, his Infinite Majesty King Hydroflax of the Final Cluster.

Will any of them make it out alive? And when will River Song work out who the Doctor is? All will be revealed on a starliner full of galactic supervillains, and a destination the Doctor has been avoiding for a very long time...

QUOTE UNQUOTE

RIVER: "My diary. One should always have something sensational to read on a spaceship."
THE DOCTOR: "Is it sad?"
RIVER: "Why would a diary be sad?"
THE DOCTOR: "I don't know. But you look sad."
RIVER: "It's nearly full."
THE DOCTOR: "So?"
RIVER: "The man who gave me this, he was the sort of man who'd know exactly how long a diary you were going to need."
THE DOCTOR: "He sounds awful."

River turns her big, dewey eyes on her latest Doctor...

we like to make out. That streak of arrogance and imperiousness has always been there. I think the nastiest scene I ever wrote for the Doctor was in *The Impossible Astronaut* [2011], in the TARDIS, when Matt's Doctor scolds them all and was going to take them home.

"What's different in *The Husbands of River Song* is, River doesn't know it's him for a lot of it, so she behaves differently, and he hears what she says about him – and, for a while, he worries what she actually thinks of him. But the moment she realises it's him, she treats him much the same way that she does the other Doctors – and Big Finish is helping with this." Next month, Big Finish is releasing an epic, full-cast audio play, in four parts, under the umbrella title *The Diary of River Song*, which pairs River with Eighth Doctor Paul McGann. "River is slightly absent-minded about which face he's wearing," says Steven. "She just sees the Doctor. I don't think it bothers her which manic hairdo he's got at the time."

And how does the Doctor feel about all this on-again-off-again relationship?

"We never precisely say. We've always been quite careful to preserve that ambiguity. River admits that she has no idea what the Doctor thinks of her, or whether he loves her back. What's rather lovely is, that makes her seems stronger than him. She's quite happy to admit how she feels, and the Doctor isn't. He doesn't know what to say. Although, I think we *know* how he feels about River. The thing about Peter's Doctor is, we say 'grumpy', and 'reticent', and 'darker', but he's like an exposed nerve: his confusion, his anger, his so-mortally-in-love-with-people thing, it's so close to the surface. It's all there."

An intriguing Christmas bauble!

Paying tribute to Alex Kingston's fantastic portrayal of River, Steven says: "I remember when she first played it, in the Library episodes [2008 two-parter *Silence in the Library*/*Forest of the Dead*], she was much more sort of... emotional, and kind of... heart-on-sleeve. I'd written her quite hard-bitten, because it was the older River, and Alex came in and gave it such heart and compassion. River was upset when anyone died, and she was *so* dewy-eyed over the Doctor, and that it made it quite different. What I've done over the years is, I've carried on writing it that way, I write all the sass, knowing that Alex will come in and give it the big eyes, the quivery voice – it's all out there, every emotion is in that face – and make it so much more heart-rending. That sort of feels right to me. That's who the Doctor would fall for, if indeed he has.

"River is simultaneously badass and sort of a gentle maiden at the same time. There's a way to play that part that would make her a slightly standard-issue, badass lady version of the Doctor, but Alex didn't go for that. She plays a terribly passionate version of River. I can write it as badass as I like, knowing that Alex will add heart."

So is this River's final TV outing? Without giving away too much, it feels quite definitive...?

"I don't think it's possible to write her last adventure," answers Steven. "Her 'last' adventure was *Silence in the Library*. Also, *The Name of the Doctor*. Also, those mini-episodes that I rather like, with Matt's Doctor and River running around the TARDIS." These are two made-for-DVD *Doctor Who* mini-episodes, *First Night* and *Last Night*, written by Steven and released in November 2011 as bonus features on *The Complete Sixth Series* DVD and Blu-ray box sets. "*Last Night* was *another* of her last episodes, so how *can* you end it? When I told Russell [T Davies, former showrunner] that I thought *The Name of the Doctor* was probably it for River, he was outraged: 'That cannot be! That's like the Brigadier in *Terror of the Zygons* [1975],' he said. 'You've got to bring her back properly.' I'm just doing as instructed, as ever. Russell told me to do it!"

Who exactly, then, *is* River's husband? After some quite ambiguous *Who* antagonists of late, it's refreshing to have, in Greg Davies' King Hydroflax, an out-and-out brute of a villain.

"I wanted to keep it simple, for Christmas: a big, bad, rather stupid man, who isn't much of a threat to anything because he's so thick," laughs Steven. "This was one of the challenges throughout the making of the episode, and the direction, and the writing, and particularly the editing: how to keep this episode feeling like a rollicking good adventure. There's a lot of fun stuff going on, I hope. But beneath all that, it's also the story of the Doctor and River. This is a situation within their comfort zone, and so the audience can sit back and enjoy the ride.

"Last year, I went quite horrific with the Dream Crabs [*Last Christmas*, 2014] – all right, counterbalanced, it must be said, by Santa Claus! – but this time I thought, 'Yeahhh, Hydroflax is an enjoyable Christmas villain, who the kids will laugh at, and hopefully the adults will too.' It's a Christmas love story for the Doctor and River... with a rampaging, alien idiot in hot pursuit!" **DWM**

KING SONG!

We tracked down River Song's *other* husband – King Hydroflax – *aka* Greg Davies, star of *Man Down*, *Cuckoo*, and *The Inbetweeners*...

INTERVIEW BY **BENJAMIN COOK**

Greg Davies: well-versed in ways to get a head.

Hello, Greg. How are you today?

"I'm very well, thanks. I'm on a very loud Lakeside, playing celebrity darts [for the BBC's *Sport Relief*]."

Amazing! We're here to talk about *The Husbands of River Song*. What attracted you to the role of his Infinite Majesty, King Hydroflax of the Final Cluster? Was it his name?

"[Laughs] That's exactly what his name was! What attracted me to the part was... quite frankly, being offered a part in *Doctor Who*. I would have played whatever they offered me, but the fact that they asked me to play a giant murderous robot doubled the appeal! Hand on heart, I'd say I was sick with excitement. It's one of those shows that you can't quite believe that you're a part of. I can't believe that they allowed me to do it. It's a cliché, but all actors want to play the villain. It means a great deal to me, to be in such an iconic show. It's such a thrill. It's not very often you get to say that it's a real *honour* to be in something, but it really is."

So appearing in *Doctor Who* lived up to your expectations?

"Absolutely. It's a really good episode. It's one of the few jobs that I really was able to relax and enjoy, and that's partly because everybody is so welcoming and lovely, right up to Peter Capaldi, who was so charming and warm. You're put at ease straight away. Also, it's such an unusual part for me to play – it's so removed from what I've become known for – that it, strangely, didn't put me on edge. I felt, 'Well, this is not really my field of expertise, so I'll just do my best,' so I had such a great time. I was sneaking off in between takes, exploring the various *Doctor Who* sets that they've got in Cardiff. I snuck off one day and wandered into a room... and there was an abandoned Dalek in the middle of what I presume is the Dalek's evil kingdom, but was possibly just a store cupboard. [Laughs] I was so excited, and genuinely frightened! When you find yourself alone with a sorry-looking Dalek..."

Greg's not just playing any body...

It's when its eyestalk starts to follow you around the room that you should get proper spooked.

"Part of me expected that! For the eyestalk to rise up, and the blue light to come on... Mercifully, it remained very still, but I did walk round the corner and jump when I first saw it. 'Oh Christ!' I thought I'd stepped into a different dimension, where these murderous swines are real."

Hydroflax has a fair few megalomaniacal lines. "I will have you flogged, and flayed, and burned. I will consume your ashes. I will crush every last remnant of you from this universe." Lines like that are an actor's dream, right? But where do you pitch that performance?

"Well, that's the question, isn't it? [Laughs] I don't know how you pitch a performance like that, but then they're such classic villainous lines, there wasn't a lot of subtlety required from me! Also, the thing about King Hydroflax is, he's full of hot air, because he's not that bright, so you're able to be very bombastic and make these ludicrous threats. Ultimately, Hydroflax is... well, he's a nit. Beneath the bombast, he's not the sharpest tool in the shed. I don't think they expected me to deliver lines like that with Shakespearean virtuosity, so Hydroflax is a fully no-holds-barred, bombastic monster. You know, he's done terrible things – a genuinely murderous character – but he comes unstuck, as you will find out."

'Unstuck' is the word. Hydroflax spends much of the episode with his head removed from his body. Was that uncomfortable?

"It definitely wins the award for the most uncomfortable shoot I've ever done, yes. There were several times when I was trapped under a table as a floating head. Even inside the robot costume... it's not a place where a man can relax. [Laughs] But you just don't care. I actually had to have a massage one night, because my back was killing me so much from one particular under-the-table move, but believe me, I'm not complaining, because it was so exciting to be in *Doctor Who*."

Hydroflax and River Song make an interesting couple. Is being married to Alex Kingston as blissful as it sounds?

"She's absolutely lovely. A really nice lady. I always sit with a degree of shame when I'm in the company of real actors, but she was very quick to put me at my ease, and very kind, and a lot of fun."

King Hydroflax meets the Doctor.

“Beneath the bombast, Hydroflax is not the sharpest tool in the shed. But he’s a fully no-holds-barred bombastic monster!”

You still don’t feel like a ‘real’ actor?
“I studied Drama at university, but then there was an *enormous* hiatus – between that, and acting in a television programme – so I always feel like I’m winging it. It’s good to be in the company of trained, serious professionals, to try and pick up a bit.”

Before becoming an actor, you spent several years as a teacher. Did that put you off kids for life?
“[Laughs] No! No, quite the reverse. I think children are hilarious. Also, I was teaching Drama, which is largely a subject that most kids are happy to take part in on some level. So I had a lot of fun teaching kids. Kids are all right, I reckon.”

I’m glad you said that, because my old secondary school is Orleans Park, in Twickenham.
“Oh! What? I taught there!”

I know. I think I left a year or two before you arrived, but I heard lots of good things about you.
“When I joined Orleans, I’d just started doing stand-up comedy, so I think it’s fair to say that my mind wasn’t 100% on the job. [Laughs] You had a lucky escape. I never really felt that teaching was my calling. The truth is, any job, not just teaching, that you didn’t mean to be in, that you don’t think is your calling, you’re always questioning yourself, whereas really good teachers are the people who were born to teach. I’m not a great loss to teaching.”

I read an interview with you in *The Big Issue* a while ago, in which you said that your earliest memories of *Doctor Who* are all of Tom Baker’s face. Please elaborate.
“It’s true! [Laughs] I just remember being thoroughly freaked out as a child by Tom Baker’s wonderfully expressive mug. It was a time when there was a lot of eccentrics on television, but he was the master, I thought. Small ‘m’. You never really knew what his Doctor was thinking, or what he was going to say next. I loved the iconic scarf. Although, I was sort of slightly distracted by the suspicion that there was something else going on with Tom Baker’s Doctor. He never focussed on one thing. I thought he was wonderful. But I loved *Doctor Who*, and I still do. I love its fantastic imagination, because there are so few restrictions for the writers, which is such an exciting starting point. All bets are off. The possibilities are endless, and it captures such a huge age range. There aren’t many shows that will have a whole family – three or four generations – all sat down watching. What a legacy! Kids worship *Doctor Who*. It sets off their imaginations. The fact that I was watching it when I was a small child, and now I’m a fat, middle-aged man who still watches it, is testament to what a fantastic show it is.”

Will you be watching yourself in *The Husbands of River Song* on Christmas Day?
“I hate to watch myself in everything, and there are whole series of things that I’ve done that I haven’t watched, because I can’t bear the sound of my own voice, but this is an absolute, notable exception. Me and my family have already booked out that timeslot. This year, I’m going up north to be with my sister and my mum and my nieces, I think. We don’t have a lot in common with our TV viewing over the Christmas period, but *Doctor Who* is the one show that we will all be guaranteed to watch. We’ll all be sitting around the telly, watching out for King Hydroflax.”

Are you hoping that King Hydroflax will scare the kids?
“I hope he will scare kids *in the right way*. For the first half of the show at least, he’s a pretty fearsome character, so I hope that children will feel at least apprehensive at the sight of a nine-foot robot making such graphic threats. [Laughs] He’s not quite the Daleks, but he’s a pretty horrible bloke.”

If you head out on Boxing Day, you could probably terrify a few kids.
“Definitely. I shall be wearing a red outfit and walking down my street on stilts, just so that people recognise me.” **DWM**

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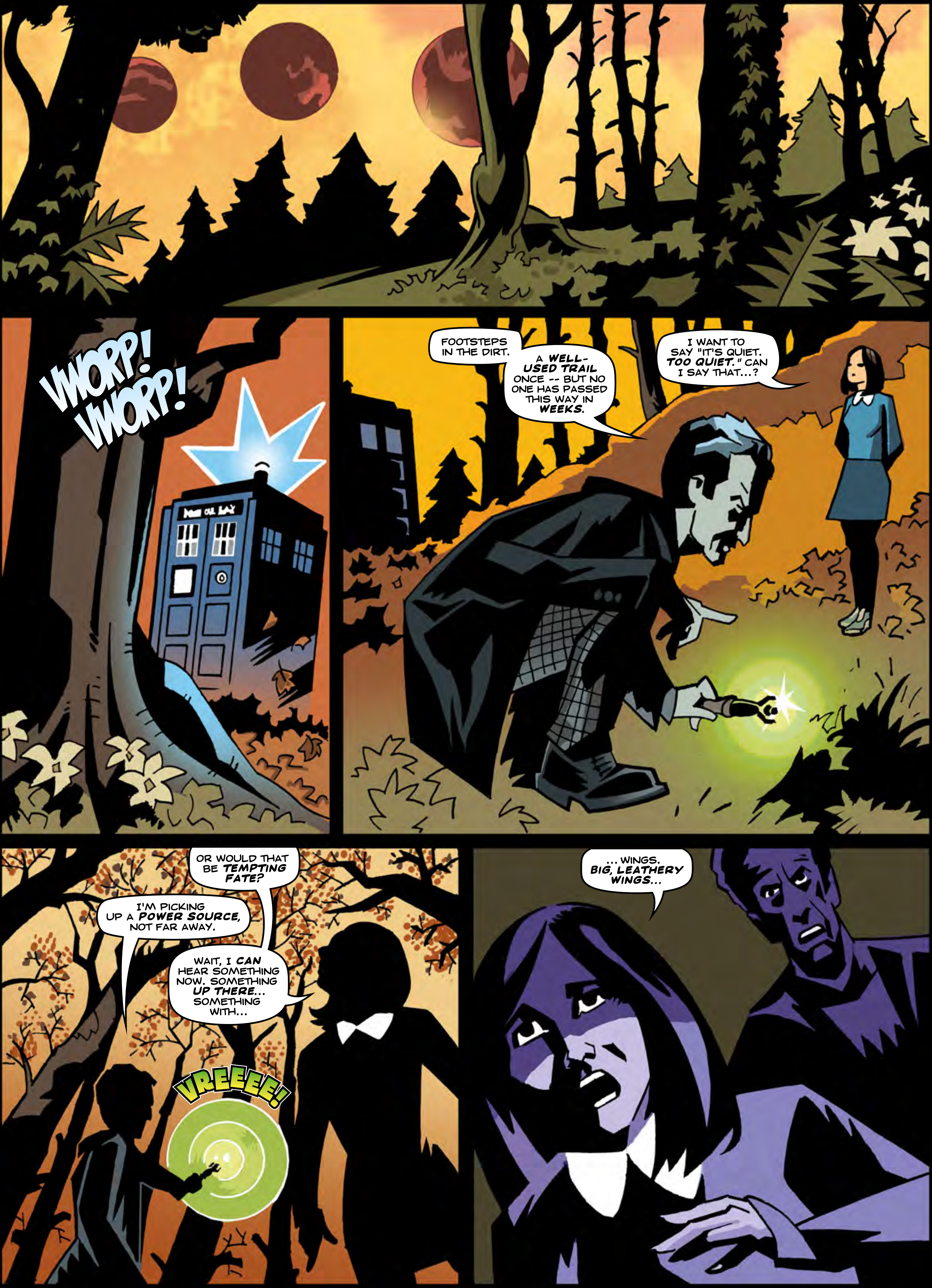
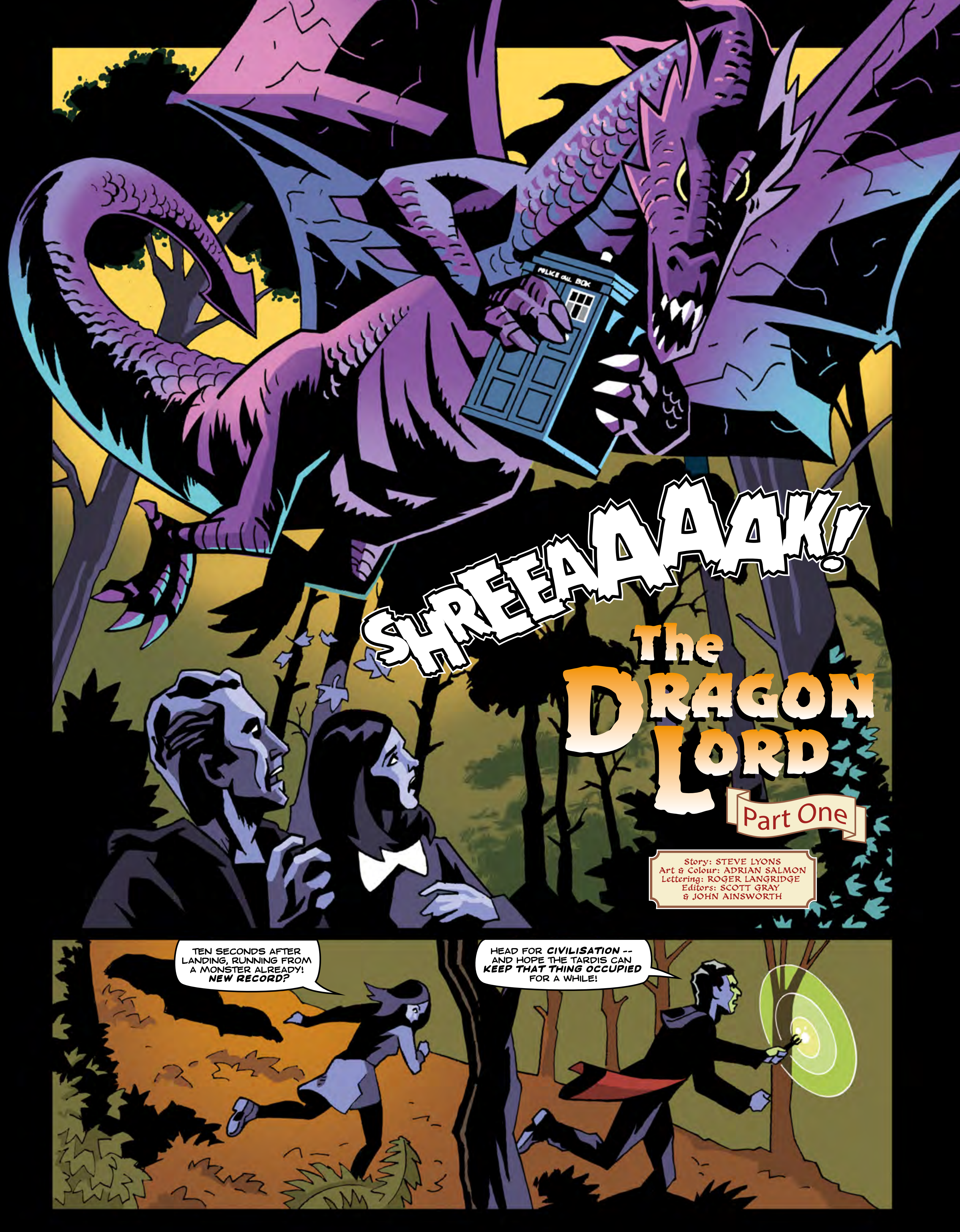
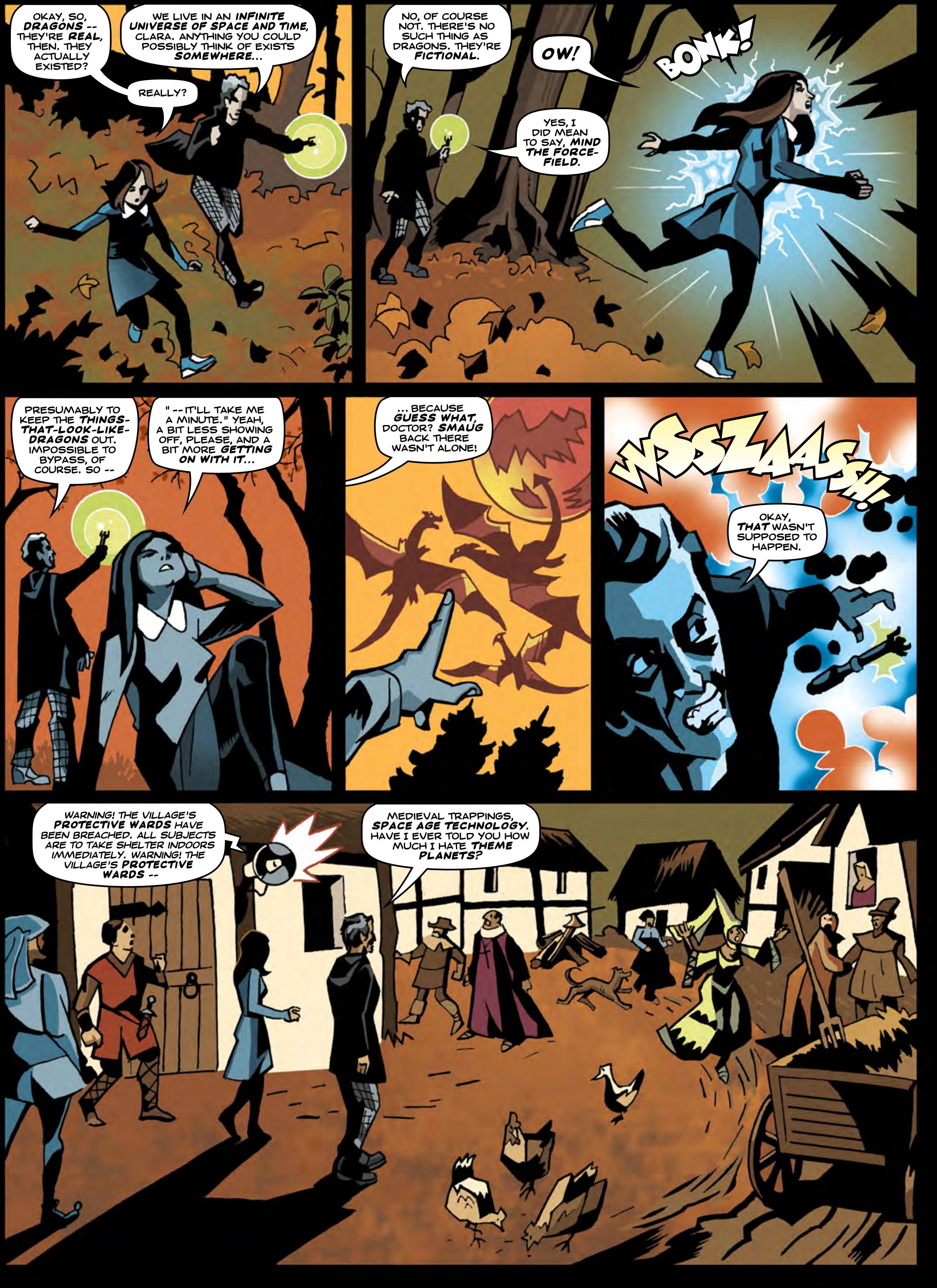

VWORP! VWORP!
FOOTSTEPS IN THE DIRT.
A WELL-USED TRAIL ONCE -- BUT NO ONE HAS PASSED THIS WAY IN WEEKS.
I WANT TO SAY "IT'S QUIET. TOO QUIET." CAN I SAY THAT...?
OR WOULD THAT BE TEMPTING FATE?
I'M PICKING UP A POWER SOURCE, NOT FAR AWAY.
WAIT, I CAN HEAR SOMETHING NOW. SOMETHING UP THERE... SOMETHING WITH...
VREEEE!
... WINGS. BIG, LEATHERY WINGS...

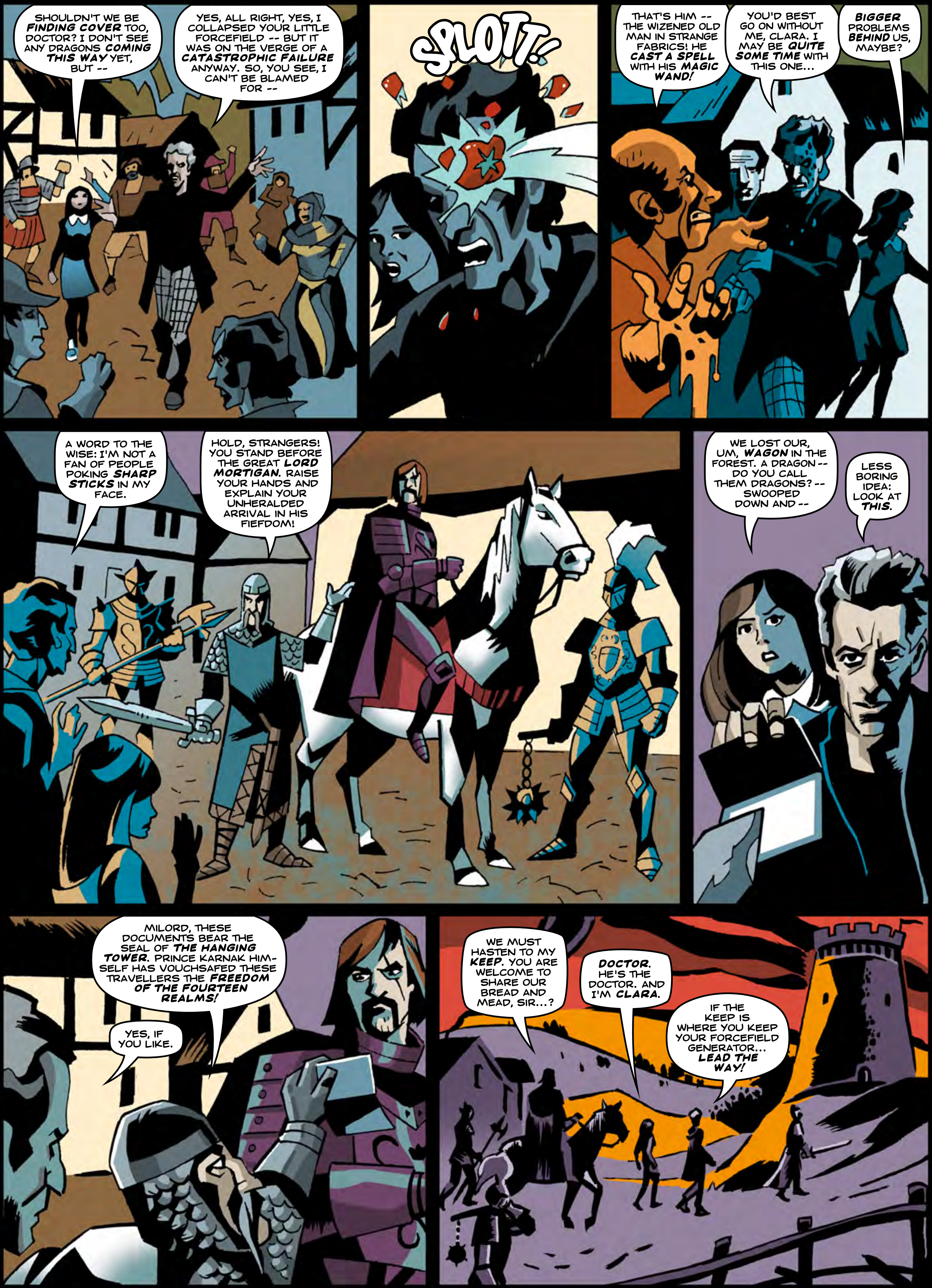
The DRAGON LORD

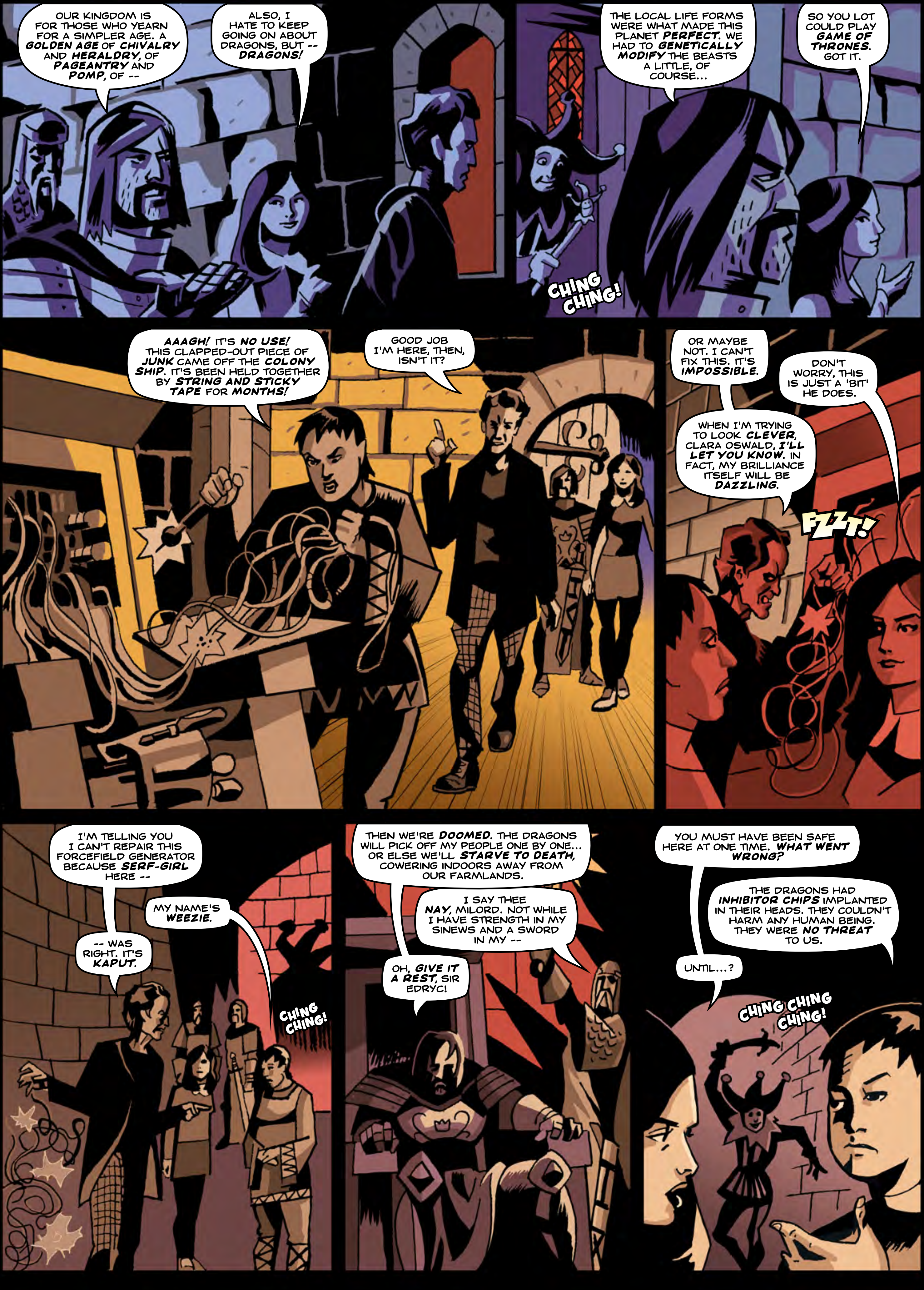
Part One

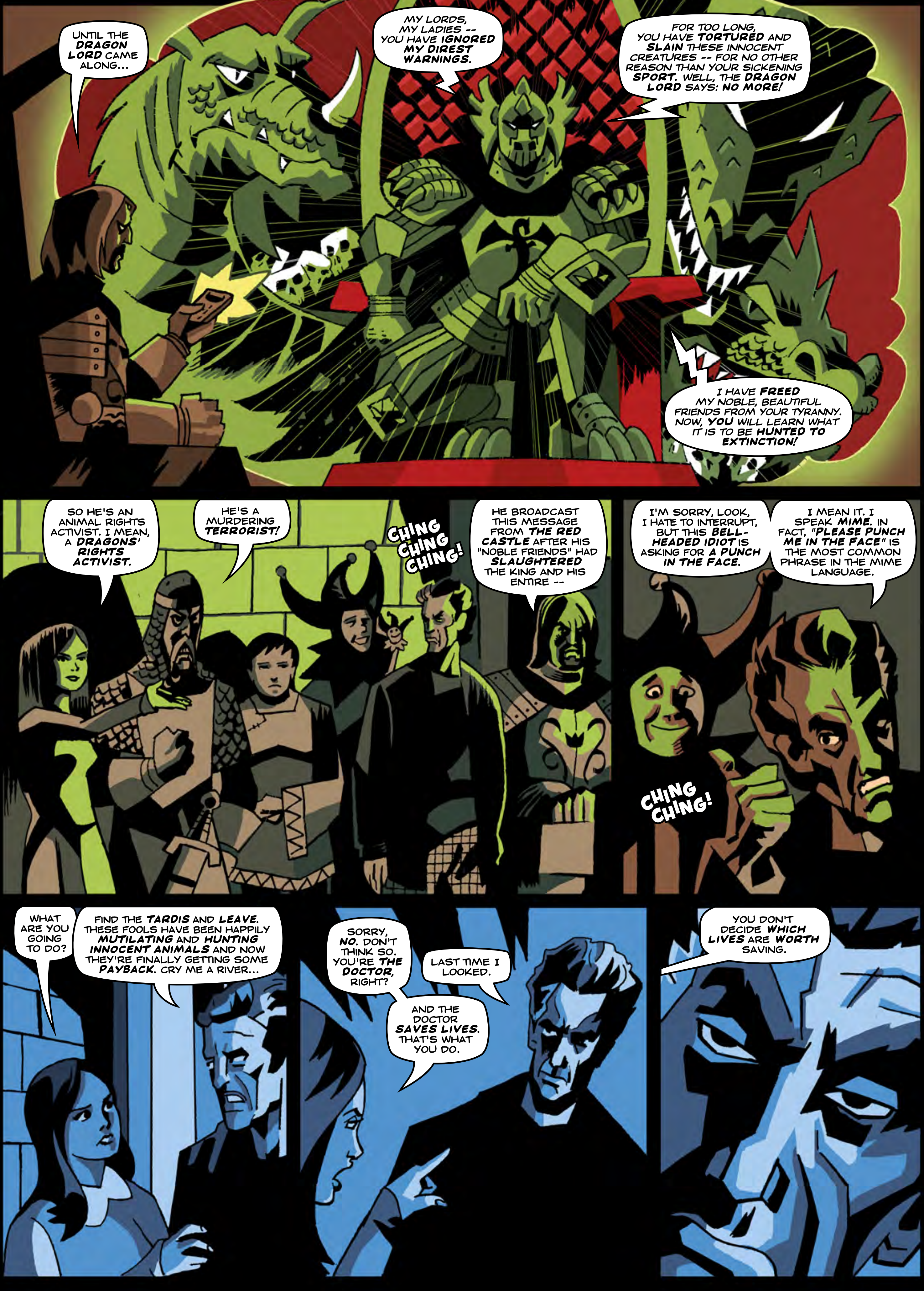
Story: STEVE LYONS
Art & Colour: ADRIAN SALMON
Lettering: ROGER LANGRIDGE
Editors: SCOTT GRAY
& JOHN AINSWORTH

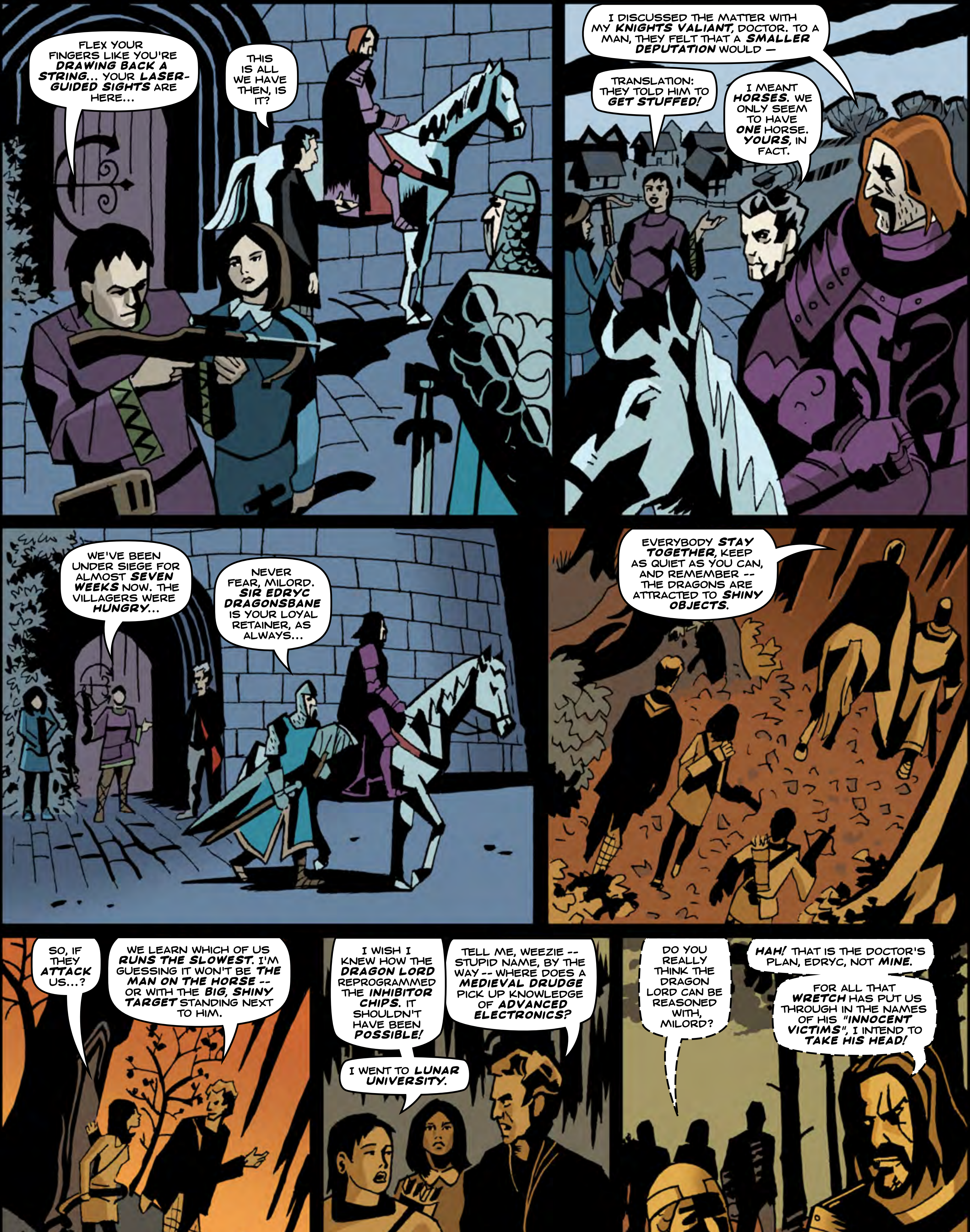

SHREEAAAAK!
TEN SECONDS AFTER LANDING, RUNNING FROM A MONSTER ALREADY! *NEW RECORD?*
HEAD FOR *CIVILISATION* -- AND HOPE THE TARDIS CAN *KEEP THAT THING OCCUPIED* FOR A WHILE!

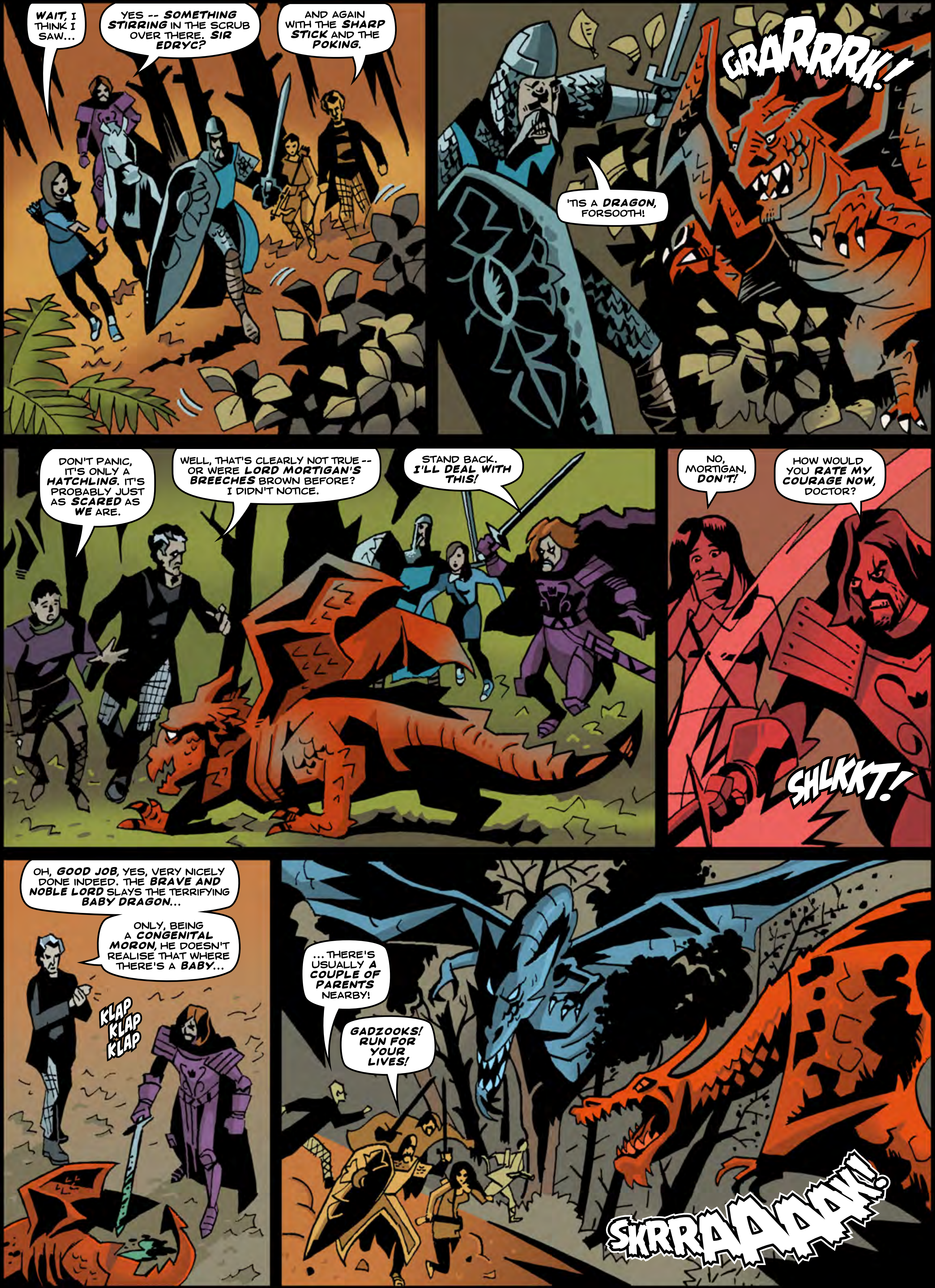

OKAY, SO, DRAGONS -- THEY'RE REAL, THEN. THEY ACTUALLY EXISTED?
WE LIVE IN AN INFINITE UNIVERSE OF SPACE AND TIME, CLARA. ANYTHING YOU COULD POSSIBLY THINK OF EXISTS SOMEWHERE...
REALLY?
NO, OF COURSE NOT. THERE'S NO SUCH THING AS DRAGONS. THEY'RE FICTIONAL.
OW!
BONK!
YES, I DID MEAN TO SAY, MIND THE FORCE-FIELD.
PRESUMABLY TO KEEP THE THINGS-THAT-LOOK-LIKE-DRAGONS OUT. IMPOSSIBLE TO BYPASS, OF COURSE. SO --
" -- IT'LL TAKE ME A MINUTE." YEAH, A BIT LESS SHOWING OFF, PLEASE, AND A BIT MORE GETTING ON WITH IT...
... BECAUSE GUESS WHAT, DOCTOR? SMAUG BACK THERE WASN'T ALONE!
WSSZAASH!
OKAY, THAT WASN'T SUPPOSED TO HAPPEN.
WARNING! THE VILLAGE'S PROTECTIVE WARDS HAVE BEEN BREACHED. ALL SUBJECTS ARE TO TAKE SHELTER INDOORS IMMEDIATELY. WARNING! THE VILLAGE'S PROTECTIVE WARDS --
MEDIEVAL TRAPPINGS, SPACE AGE TECHNOLOGY. HAVE I EVER TOLD YOU HOW MUCH I HATE THEME PLANETS?

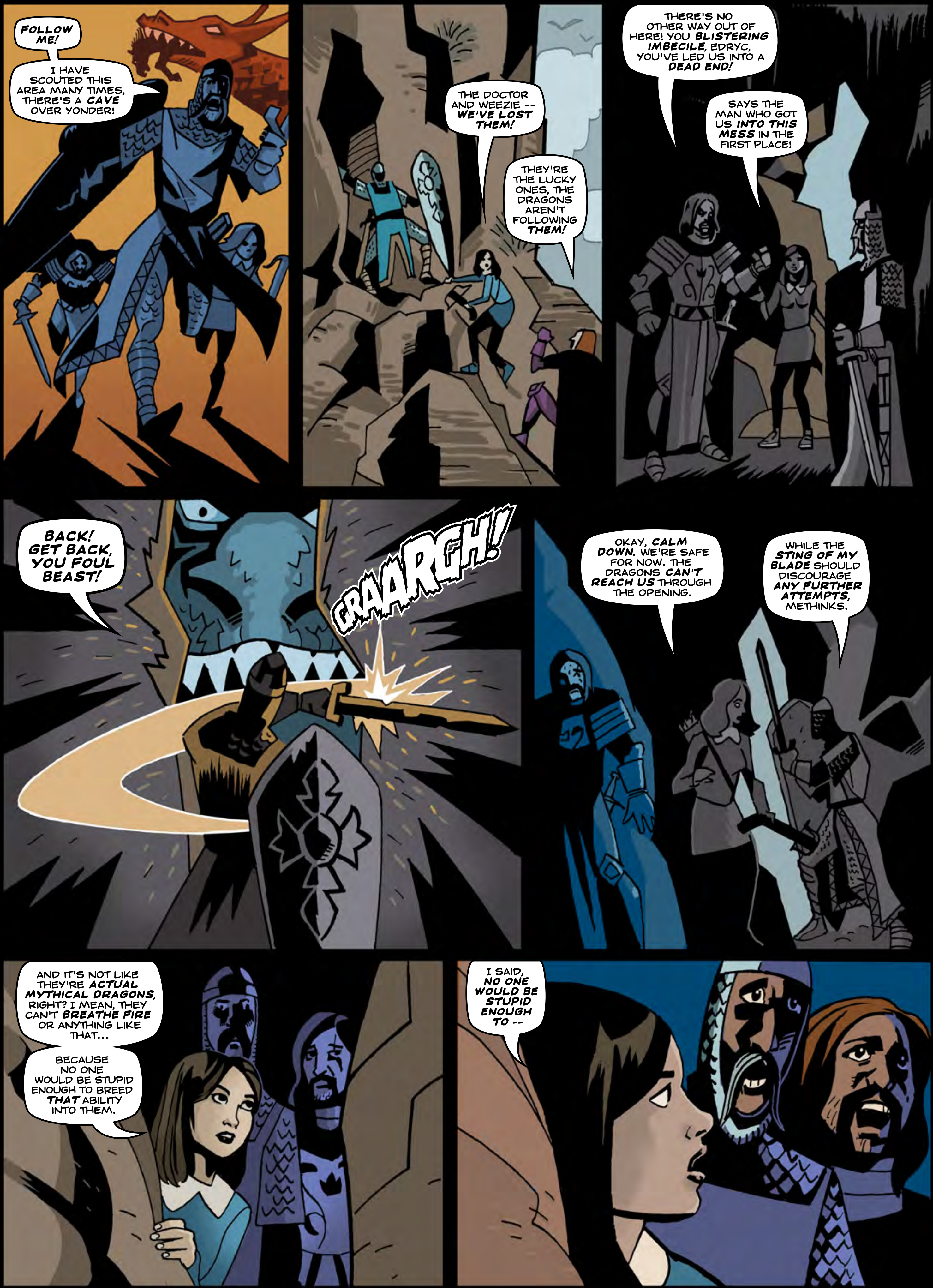

SHOULDN'T WE BE **FINDING COVER** TOO, DOCTOR? I DON'T SEE ANY DRAGONS **COMING THIS WAY** YET, BUT --
YES, ALL RIGHT, YES, I COLLAPSED YOUR LITTLE FORCEFIELD -- BUT IT WAS ON THE VERGE OF A **CATASTROPHIC FAILURE** ANYWAY. SO, YOU SEE, I CAN'T BE BLAMED FOR --
SPLOTT!
THAT'S HIM -- THE WIZENED OLD MAN IN STRANGE FABRICS! HE **CAST A SPELL** WITH HIS **MAGIC WAND!**
YOU'D BEST GO ON WITHOUT ME, CLARA. I MAY BE **QUITE SOME TIME** WITH THIS ONE...
BIGGER PROBLEMS **BEHIND** US, MAYBE?
A WORD TO THE WISE: I'M NOT A FAN OF PEOPLE POKING **SHARP STICKS** IN MY FACE.
HOLD, STRANGERS! YOU STAND BEFORE THE GREAT **LORD MORTIGAN**. RAISE YOUR HANDS AND EXPLAIN YOUR UNHERALDED ARRIVAL IN HIS FIEFDOM!
WE LOST OUR, UM, **WAGON** IN THE FOREST. A DRAGON -- DO YOU CALL THEM DRAGONS? -- SWOOPED DOWN AND --
LESS BORING IDEA: LOOK AT **THIS**.
MILORD, THESE DOCUMENTS BEAR THE SEAL OF **THE HANGING TOWER**. PRINCE KARNAK HIMSELF HAS VOUCHSAFED THESE TRAVELLERS THE **FREEDOM OF THE FOURTEEN REALMS!**
YES, IF YOU LIKE.
WE MUST HASTEN TO MY **KEEP**. YOU ARE WELCOME TO SHARE OUR BREAD AND MEAD, SIR...?
DOCTOR. HE'S THE DOCTOR. AND I'M **CLARA**.
IF THE KEEP IS WHERE YOU KEEP YOUR FORCEFIELD GENERATOR... **LEAD THE WAY!**

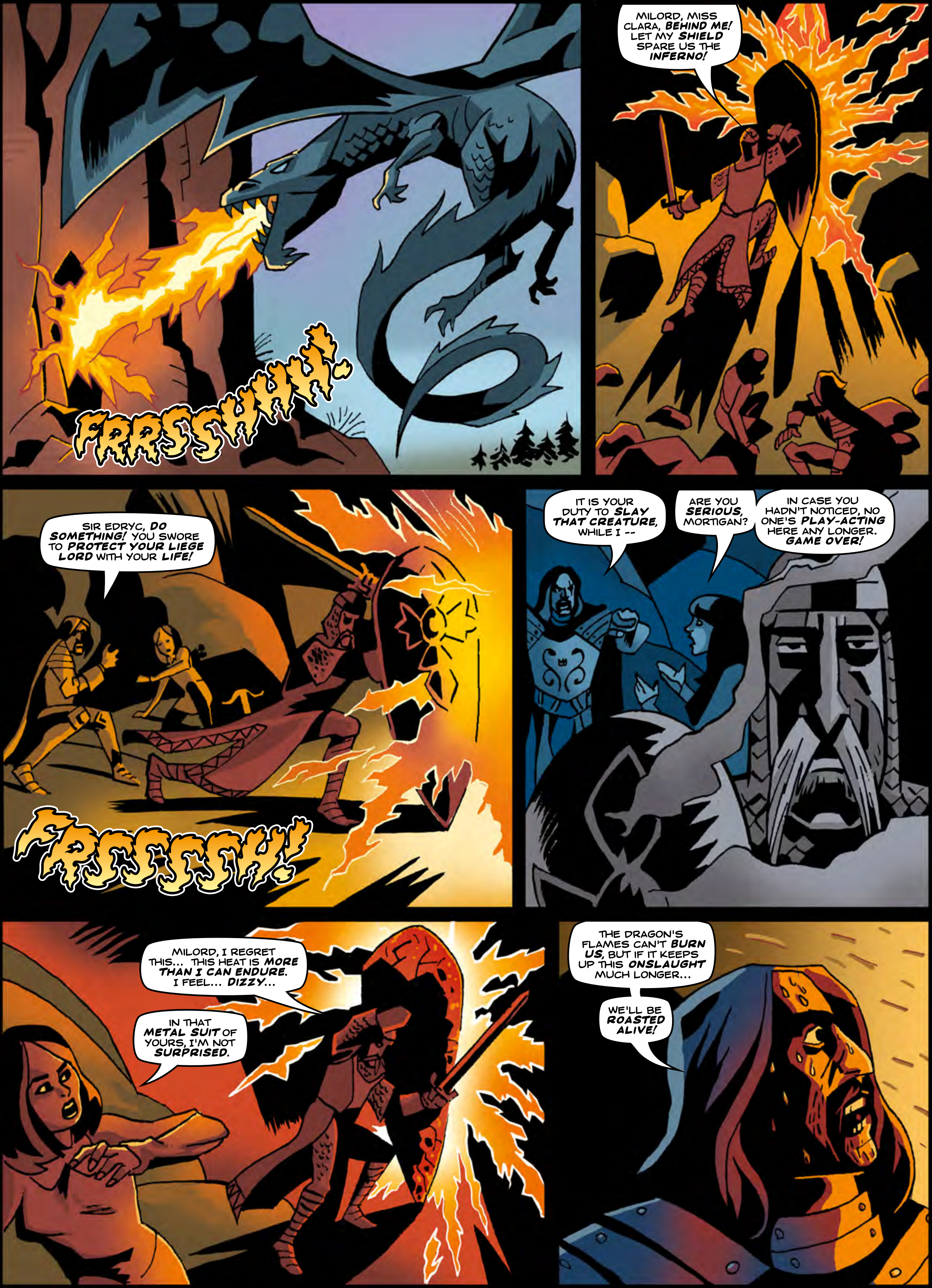

OUR KINGDOM IS FOR THOSE WHO YEARN FOR A SIMPLER AGE. A GOLDEN AGE OF CHIVALRY AND HERALDRY, OF PAGEANTRY AND POMP, OF --
ALSO, I HATE TO KEEP GOING ON ABOUT DRAGONS, BUT -- DRAGONS!
THE LOCAL LIFE FORMS WERE WHAT MADE THIS PLANET PERFECT. WE HAD TO GENETICALLY MODIFY THE BEASTS A LITTLE, OF COURSE...
SO YOU LOT COULD PLAY GAME OF THRONES. GOT IT.
CHING CHING!
AAAGH! IT'S NO USE! THIS CLAPPED-OUT PIECE OF JUNK CAME OFF THE COLONY SHIP. IT'S BEEN HELD TOGETHER BY STRING AND STICKY TAPE FOR MONTHS!
GOOD JOB I'M HERE, THEN, ISN'T IT?
OR MAYBE NOT. I CAN'T FIX THIS. IT'S IMPOSSIBLE.
DON'T WORRY, THIS IS JUST A 'BIT' HE DOES.
WHEN I'M TRYING TO LOOK CLEVER, CLARA OSWALD, I'LL LET YOU KNOW. IN FACT, MY BRILLIANCE ITSELF WILL BE DAZZLING.
FZZT!
I'M TELLING YOU I CAN'T REPAIR THIS FORCEFIELD GENERATOR BECAUSE SERF-GIRL HERE --
MY NAME'S WEEZIE.
-- WAS RIGHT. IT'S KAPUT.
CHING CHING!
THEN WE'RE DOOMED. THE DRAGONS WILL PICK OFF MY PEOPLE ONE BY ONE... OR ELSE WE'LL STARVE TO DEATH, COWERING INDOORS AWAY FROM OUR FARMLANDS.
I SAY THEE NAY, MILORD. NOT WHILE I HAVE STRENGTH IN MY SINEWS AND A SWORD IN MY --
OH, GIVE IT A REST, SIR EDRYC!
YOU MUST HAVE BEEN SAFE HERE AT ONE TIME. WHAT WENT WRONG?
THE DRAGONS HAD INHIBITOR CHIPS IMPLANTED IN THEIR HEADS. THEY COULDN'T HARM ANY HUMAN BEING. THEY WERE NO THREAT TO US.
UNTIL...?
CHING CHING CHING!

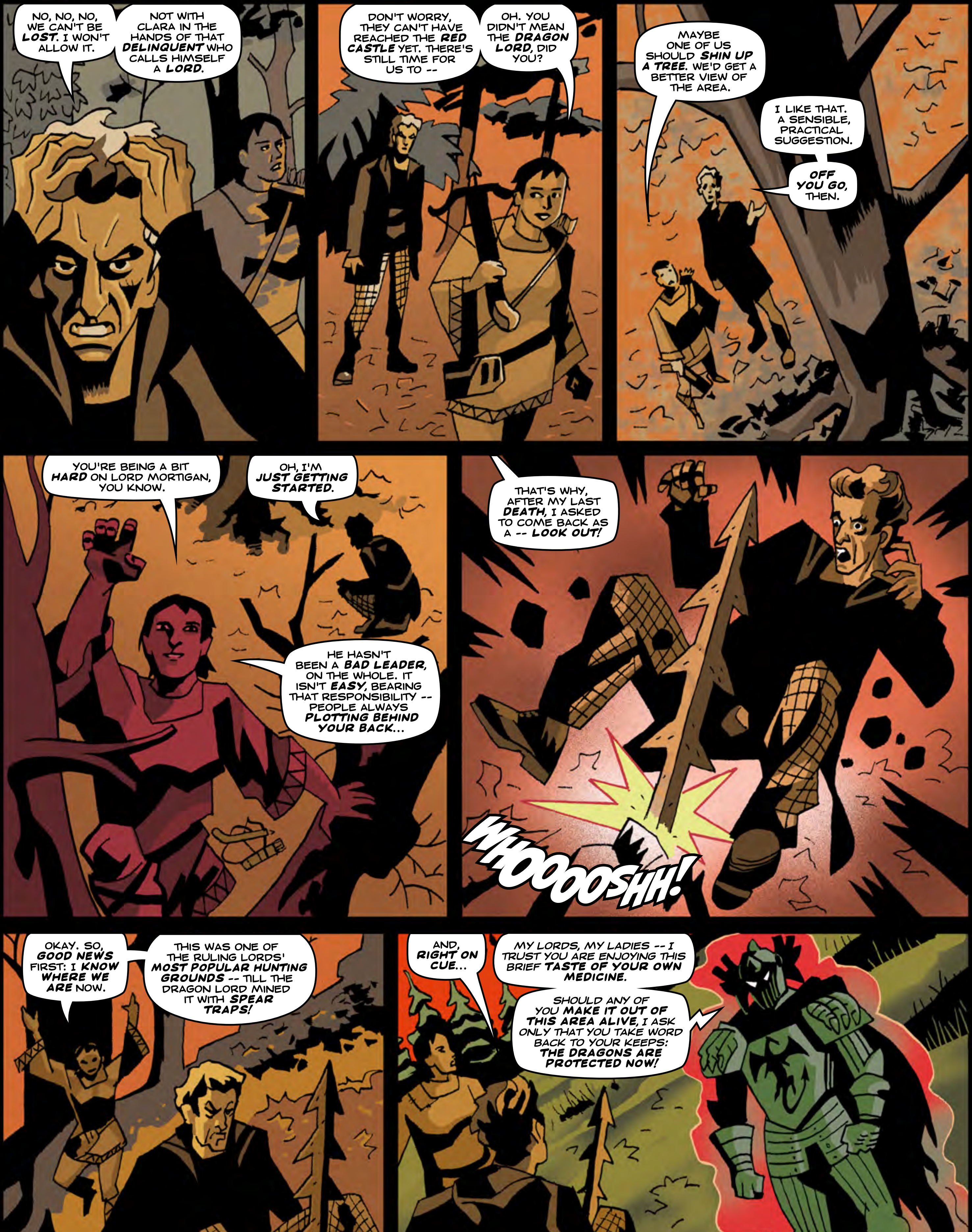

UNTIL THE **DRAGON LORD** CAME ALONG...
MY LORDS, MY LADIES -- YOU HAVE **IGNORED MY DIREST WARNINGS.**
FOR TOO LONG, YOU HAVE **TORTURED** AND **SLAIN** THESE INNOCENT CREATURES -- FOR NO OTHER REASON THAN YOUR SICKENING **SPORT**. WELL, THE **DRAGON LORD** SAYS: **NO MORE!**
I HAVE **FREED** MY NOBLE, BEAUTIFUL FRIENDS FROM YOUR TYRANNY. NOW, **YOU** WILL LEARN WHAT IT IS TO BE **HUNTED TO EXTINCTION!**
SO HE'S AN ANIMAL RIGHTS ACTIVIST. I MEAN, A **DRAGONS' RIGHTS ACTIVIST.**
HE'S A MURDERING **TERRORIST!**
CHING CHING CHING!
HE BROADCAST THIS MESSAGE FROM **THE RED CASTLE** AFTER HIS "NOBLE FRIENDS" HAD **SLAUGHTERED** THE KING AND HIS ENTIRE --
I'M SORRY, LOOK, I HATE TO INTERRUPT, BUT THIS **BELL-HEADED IDIOT** IS ASKING FOR **A PUNCH IN THE FACE.**
I MEAN IT. I SPEAK **MIME.** IN FACT, **"PLEASE PUNCH ME IN THE FACE"** IS THE MOST COMMON PHRASE IN THE MIME LANGUAGE.
CHING CHING!
WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO DO?
FIND THE **TARDIS** AND **LEAVE.** THESE FOOLS HAVE BEEN HAPPILY **MUTILATING** AND **HUNTING INNOCENT ANIMALS** AND NOW THEY'RE FINALLY GETTING SOME **PAYBACK**. CRY ME A RIVER...
SORRY, **NO.** DON'T THINK SO. YOU'RE **THE DOCTOR,** RIGHT?
LAST TIME I LOOKED.
AND THE DOCTOR **SAVES LIVES.** THAT'S WHAT YOU DO.
YOU DON'T DECIDE **WHICH LIVES** ARE **WORTH** SAVING.

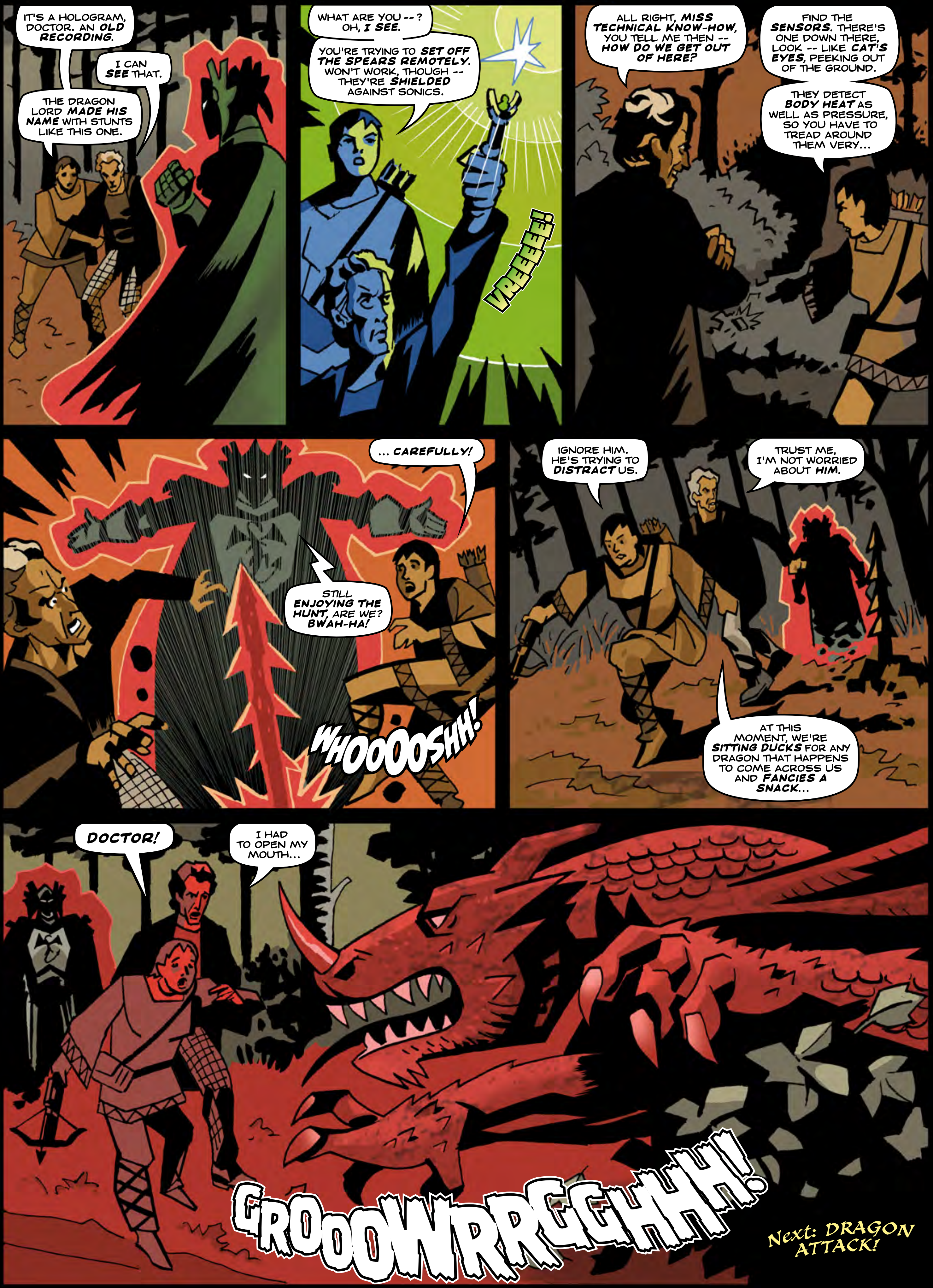

FLEX YOUR FINGERS LIKE YOU'RE DRAWING BACK A STRING... YOUR LASER-GUIDED SIGHTS ARE HERE...
THIS IS ALL WE HAVE THEN, IS IT?
I DISCUSSED THE MATTER WITH MY KNIGHTS VALIANT, DOCTOR. TO A MAN, THEY FELT THAT A SMALLER DEPUTATION WOULD —
TRANSLATION: THEY TOLD HIM TO GET STUFFED!
I MEANT HORSES. WE ONLY SEEM TO HAVE ONE HORSE. YOURS, IN FACT.
WE'VE BEEN UNDER SIEGE FOR ALMOST SEVEN WEEKS NOW. THE VILLAGERS WERE HUNGRY...
NEVER FEAR, MILORD. SIR EDRYC DRAGONSBANE IS YOUR LOYAL RETAINER, AS ALWAYS...
EVERYBODY STAY TOGETHER, KEEP AS QUIET AS YOU CAN, AND REMEMBER -- THE DRAGONS ARE ATTRACTED TO SHINY OBJECTS.
SO, IF THEY ATTACK US...?
WE LEARN WHICH OF US RUNS THE SLOWEST. I'M GUESSING IT WON'T BE THE MAN ON THE HORSE -- OR WITH THE BIG, SHINY TARGET STANDING NEXT TO HIM.
I WISH I KNEW HOW THE DRAGON LORD REPROGRAMMED THE INHIBITOR CHIPS. IT SHOULDN'T HAVE BEEN POSSIBLE!
TELL ME, WEEZIE -- STUPID NAME, BY THE WAY -- WHERE DOES A MEDIEVAL DRUDGE PICK UP KNOWLEDGE OF ADVANCED ELECTRONICS?
I WENT TO LUNAR UNIVERSITY.
DO YOU REALLY THINK THE DRAGON LORD CAN BE REASONED WITH, MILORD?
HAH! THAT IS THE DOCTOR'S PLAN, EDRYC, NOT MINE.
FOR ALL THAT WRETCH HAS PUT US THROUGH IN THE NAMES OF HIS "INNOCENT VICTIMS", I INTEND TO TAKE HIS HEAD!


WAIT, I THINK I SAW...
YES -- SOMETHING STIRRING IN THE SCRUB OVER THERE. SIR EDRYC?
AND AGAIN WITH THE SHARP STICK AND THE POKING.
GRARRRRK!
'TIS A DRAGON, FORSOOTH!
DON'T PANIC, IT'S ONLY A HATCHLING. IT'S PROBABLY JUST AS SCARED AS WE ARE.
WELL, THAT'S CLEARLY NOT TRUE -- OR WERE LORD MORTIGAN'S BREECHES BROWN BEFORE? I DIDN'T NOTICE.
STAND BACK. I'LL DEAL WITH THIS!
NO, MORTIGAN, DON'T!
HOW WOULD YOU RATE MY COURAGE NOW, DOCTOR?
SHLKKT!
OH, GOOD JOB, YES, VERY NICELY DONE INDEED. THE BRAVE AND NOBLE LORD SLAYS THE TERRIFYING BABY DRAGON...
ONLY, BEING A CONGENITAL MORON, HE DOESN'T REALISE THAT WHERE THERE'S A BABY...
KLAP KLAP KLAP
...THERE'S USUALLY A COUPLE OF PARENTS NEARBY!
GADZOOKS! RUN FOR YOUR LIVES!
SKRRAAAAK!


FOLLOW ME!
I HAVE SCOUTED THIS AREA MANY TIMES, THERE'S A CAVE OVER YONDER!
THE DOCTOR AND WEEZIE -- WE'VE LOST THEM!
THEY'RE THE LUCKY ONES, THE DRAGONS AREN'T FOLLOWING THEM!
THERE'S NO OTHER WAY OUT OF HERE! YOU BLISTERING IMBECILE, EDRYC, YOU'VE LED US INTO A DEAD END!
SAYS THE MAN WHO GOT US INTO THIS MESS IN THE FIRST PLACE!
BACK! GET BACK, YOU FOUL BEAST!
GRAARGH!
OKAY, CALM DOWN. WE'RE SAFE FOR NOW. THE DRAGONS CAN'T REACH US THROUGH THE OPENING.
WHILE THE STING OF MY BLADE SHOULD DISCOURAGE ANY FURTHER ATTEMPTS, METHINKS.
AND IT'S NOT LIKE THEY'RE ACTUAL MYTHICAL DRAGONS, RIGHT? I MEAN, THEY CAN'T BREATHE FIRE OR ANYTHING LIKE THAT...
BECAUSE NO ONE WOULD BE STUPID ENOUGH TO BREED THAT ABILITY INTO THEM.
I SAID, NO ONE WOULD BE STUPID ENOUGH TO --


FRRSSHHH!
MILORD, MISS CLARA, **BEHIND ME!** LET MY **SHIELD** SPARE US THE **INFERNO!**
SIR EDRYC, **DO SOMETHING!** YOU SWORE TO **PROTECT YOUR LIEGE LORD** WITH YOUR **LIFE!**
FRSSSSH!
IT IS YOUR DUTY TO **SLAY THAT CREATURE,** WHILE I --
ARE YOU **SERIOUS,** MORTIGAN?
IN CASE YOU HADN'T NOTICED, NO ONE'S **PLAY-ACTING** HERE ANY LONGER. **GAME OVER!**
MILORD, I REGRET THIS... THIS HEAT IS **MORE THAN I CAN ENDURE.** I FEEL... **DIZZY...**
IN THAT **METAL SUIT** OF YOURS, I'M NOT **SURPRISED.**
THE DRAGON'S FLAMES CAN'T **BURN US,** BUT IF IT KEEPS UP THIS **ONSLAUGHT** MUCH LONGER...
WE'LL BE **ROASTED ALIVE!**


NO, NO, NO, WE CAN'T BE LOST. I WON'T ALLOW IT.
NOT WITH CLARA IN THE HANDS OF THAT DELINQUENT WHO CALLS HIMSELF A LORD.
DON'T WORRY, THEY CAN'T HAVE REACHED THE RED CASTLE YET. THERE'S STILL TIME FOR US TO --
OH. YOU DIDN'T MEAN THE DRAGON LORD, DID YOU?
MAYBE ONE OF US SHOULD SHIN UP A TREE. WE'D GET A BETTER VIEW OF THE AREA.
I LIKE THAT. A SENSIBLE, PRACTICAL SUGGESTION.
OFF YOU GO, THEN.
YOU'RE BEING A BIT HARD ON LORD MORTIGAN, YOU KNOW.
OH, I'M JUST GETTING STARTED.
HE HASN'T BEEN A BAD LEADER, ON THE WHOLE. IT ISN'T EASY, BEARING THAT RESPONSIBILITY -- PEOPLE ALWAYS PLOTTING BEHIND YOUR BACK...
THAT'S WHY, AFTER MY LAST DEATH, I ASKED TO COME BACK AS A -- LOOK OUT!
WHOOOOOSHH!
OKAY. SO, GOOD NEWS FIRST: I KNOW WHERE WE ARE NOW.
THIS WAS ONE OF THE RULING LORDS' MOST POPULAR HUNTING GROUNDS -- TILL THE DRAGON LORD MINED IT WITH SPEAR TRAPS!
AND, RIGHT ON CUE...
MY LORDS, MY LADIES -- I TRUST YOU ARE ENJOYING THIS BRIEF TASTE OF YOUR OWN MEDICINE.
SHOULD ANY OF YOU MAKE IT OUT OF THIS AREA ALIVE, I ASK ONLY THAT YOU TAKE WORD BACK TO YOUR KEEPS: THE DRAGONS ARE PROTECTED NOW!


IT'S A HOLOGRAM, DOCTOR. AN OLD RECORDING.
I CAN SEE THAT.
THE DRAGON LORD MADE HIS NAME WITH STUNTS LIKE THIS ONE.
WHAT ARE YOU -- ? OH, I SEE.
YOU'RE TRYING TO SET OFF THE SPEARS REMOTELY. WON'T WORK, THOUGH -- THEY'RE SHIELDED AGAINST SONICS.
VREEEEE!
ALL RIGHT, MISS TECHNICAL KNOW-HOW, YOU TELL ME THEN -- HOW DO WE GET OUT OF HERE?
FIND THE SENSORS. THERE'S ONE DOWN THERE, LOOK -- LIKE CAT'S EYES, PEEKING OUT OF THE GROUND.
THEY DETECT BODY HEAT AS WELL AS PRESSURE, SO YOU HAVE TO TREAD AROUND THEM VERY...
... CAREFULLY!
STILL ENJOYING THE HUNT, ARE WE? BWAH-HA!
WHOOOOSHH!
IGNORE HIM. HE'S TRYING TO DISTRACT US.
TRUST ME, I'M NOT WORRIED ABOUT HIM.
AT THIS MOMENT, WE'RE SITTING DUCKS FOR ANY DRAGON THAT HAPPENS TO COME ACROSS US AND FANCIES A SNACK...
DOCTOR!
I HAD TO OPEN MY MOUTH...
GROOOWRRGGHHH!

Next: DRAGON ATTACK!

Take a closer look

Christmas is almost here! But there's lots to think about before we can enjoy *Doctor Who* on the big day…

BY **JACQUELINE RAYNER**

Hurrah! It's time for me to write a Christmas column! Except… Well, the thing is, I've only just seen *The Zygon Inversion*. This time last year we'd just had *Death in Heaven* and a nice Santa-y trailer so it was all *Christmas is coming! Next stop Christmas!* – but right now, for me at least, there are still four episodes in the season to go, and we don't even know the title of the Christmas Special yet. All in all, it's way too early to think about Christmas – apart from my idle wondering if any canny manufacturer might rush out some question-mark underpants in time for the Christmas market.

So, let's look at Zygons instead. "Why didn't the Doctor use the machine that goes *ding*?" asked Non-Fan Twin, remembering that the Tenth Doctor had a very handy device that could tell Zygons from humans. "Well," I said, thinking furiously, "either he didn't want to risk people on Earth having technology that could derail the peace treaty, or at some point between *The Day of the Doctor* and now, Clara sat on it." That was my attempt at an explanation. Goodness, children ask a lot of questions. Which is a *good* thing, of course. Apart from when they start to pull apart the whole idea of how the TARDIS translation circuits actually work, because it is utterly impossible to come up with a consistent explanation for that one. Mind you, I wouldn't mind a translation circuit at home. According to Fan Twin *The Zygon Inversion* was 'boss' (possible translation: 'awfully jolly good') and the Zygons themselves 'got wrecked' (possible translation: 'their naughty plan did not succeed').

"I don't like it when they make everyday things scary." That was Non-Fan Twin's reaction to last week's stuff with Clara and Jac (what an excellent name!) and lifts. Luckily we haven't had to go in any lifts this week. But it's a good point. The shock of 'everyday things becoming deadly' takes us all the way back to *Terror of the Autons* at least, and has always been what *Doctor Who* does best. (Funnily enough, worrying that children won't trust policemen in case they rip their faces off to reveal Autons is almost the exact inverse of this year's 'Don't worry if you see a man pursuing small girls in a playground – he's probably a kindly alien and they're blobby monsters in disguise'.) We'd better be careful about rewatching *The Christmas Invasion* and *The Runaway Bride* in the near future; husband always puts up the decorations at the very beginning of December so we have just over three weeks before the house contains a potentially deadly spinning Christmas tree or bauble bombs.

DING!
POLICE BOX

ILLUSTRATION: **BEN MORRIS**

> **'The shock of everyday things becoming deadly has always been what *Doctor Who* does best.'**

One of *Doctor Who*'s most powerful assets has been the incongruity of the extraordinary meeting the ordinary. The word 'iconic' is overused and often misused nowadays, but I'd be prepared to accept it as a perfect description of seeing Daleks on Westminster Bridge or Cybermen on the steps of St Paul's Cathedral. A huge strength of *Doctor Who* compared to other science-fiction or fantasy shows is that it gives you these wonderful clashes. We're so used to that now, it's perhaps hard to recapture the wonder of the very first episode, with its schoolgirl who thinks Britain already has the decimal system, and the surprise of a huge futuristic spaceship hidden inside a tiny everyday police box. The scene in *The Time Meddler* where a wrist-watch and a gramophone are discovered in 1066 is way up there with the greatest cliffhangers of all time.

Perhaps that's why I got so freaked out seeing the practically normal-looking Doctor driving a totally normal-looking car in *The Zygon Inversion*. It suddenly made the Doctor seem so *ordinary*. In *Doctor Who*, it's the completely normal that's incongruous. Remember how the Ninth Doctor 'didn't do' tea with Rose's family? But then we had the Tenth Doctor sitting down to Christmas dinner with them. It showed how much Rose had saved him, and how the Time-War-scarred veteran was being reintegrated with humanity – but it also showed an alien in a suit wearing a pink party hat. Ooh, we're back at Christmas!

So… let's have a quick Christmas game. Which Doctor would you (a) invite for Christmas dinner; (b) sit on his knee and tell him what you'd like for Christmas; and (c) give a pair of question-mark underpants to? I'm going for (a) the Ninth Doctor – because I hate cooking and I know he'd refuse to come; (b) the Seventh Doctor – because he'd go back and rewrite time so you got your perfect present, and (c) the First Doctor – because can you imagine the look on his face?

Who would you choose?

All of which leaves me with just one Christmas question. If I get some plain underpants and embroider question marks on them, will they be too scratchy to wear? Why not ask husband sometime after 25 December… **DWM**

HEAVEN &

“The most magical moment was when Peter Capaldi walked onto this set… and then to see his face!”

HELL

The director of this season’s final two episodes tells us how she rose to the challenge of bringing back Gallifrey...

INTERVIEW BY
BENJAMIN COOK

Director Rachel Talalay is deep in post-production on *Heaven Sent* and *Hell Bent,* the final two episodes of *Doctor Who*’s stellar 2015 series. She’s spent most of this week in a grading suite in Soho, London.

“It’s one of my happy places, being in that room, watching things get better,” she says.

It’s a wet Wednesday morning in late October, and we’re settled in a meeting room just down the corridor from Rachel’s “happy place”, drinking coffee. Next week, Chicago-born Rachel is heading back to America to direct the CW series *The Flash*, based on the DC Comics superhero. She’ll be in the States when her *Who* episodes air. “I do have British citizenship,” she explains, “although I live in Vancouver, Canada, which is what makes it so special that I’m allowed on *Doctor Who*. It’s amazing to me, because I’m absolutely passionate about the show.”

Rachel, 57, directed last year’s final two episodes – *Dark Water* and *Death in Heaven* – too.

“The challenges this year were maybe even more exciting.” Episode 11, *Heaven Sent,* is “tremendously complex,” she says, “and has many, many, *many* layers. Each time you read it, new things come out. It was a hell of a challenge for Steven [Moffat, showrunner] to write, so my starting place was, ‘Okay, I have to rise to another level.’ My next question was, ‘How’s this going to work?’ Also, ‘How will Peter Capaldi pull this off?’ But Peter can do anything. He was so incredible. He was very engaged. He spent a lot of time on set when he didn’t have to be. He wanted to understand how it was all coming together. On day two, he had to do a lot of the stuff at the end of the episode – that tremendously impactful ending – and I still watch it and think, ‘How did he know, at that moment, to take it that far, and how did he know that that far was going to be that effective?’ He’s a brilliant actor.”

Rachel drew inspiration for the episode’s visuals from a range of sources. “The first place I went to was German expressionism. We went for hard shadows – which you don’t normally in television, because it requires more time for lighting. Steven had written some specific shadows into the script, but I thought, ‘I want to take this further.’ The second reference I went to was *Citizen Kane*. I kept these images up on my computer, of Kane alone in William Randolph Hearst-type spaces, and I harkened back to those.” Hearst was the American newspaper magnate who was the principal inspiration for the title role in Orson Welles’ 1941 film. “The soup-eating scene in Episode 11 is my *Citizen Kane* scene.”

Steven told Rachel to “make *Heaven Sent* visual, make it scary, and make it beautiful” – a director’s dream, she says, especially because of her horror background. During the 1980s and 90s, Rachel was involved with the majority of New Line Cinema’s *Nightmare on Elm Street* slasher films created by Wes Craven, starting with the original 1984 movie. She held various titles: from production manager, to producer, and eventually director of 1991’s *Freddy’s Dead: The Final Nightmare*. “I felt very, very comfortable making Episode 11 scary. Scott Bates, the AD [assistant director], is very, very into horror as well, so we did a whole pass where we went, ‘How do we make this even scarier?’” For example, the garden where the Doctor digs up the stone tile, from the castle kitchen, with ‘I AM IN 12’ scratched into it: “In Steven’s script, it was a formal, well-tended garden. I said, ‘If we textured this into a gnarly old, graveyard-type garden, we could ►

◄ make much more out of this sequence.' Steven was like, 'Definitely,' and he let us get on with it.

"Another challenge was, Steven didn't want any actual light sources in vision – torches or fire – unless he specifically scripted it, so we started putting in unmotivated shafts of light and shadows, which was so antithetical to what the lighting people were used to. At one point, the gaffer said to me, 'If you want that shaft of light there, it has to come from *somewhere*.' I looked at him and said, 'Why?'" She lets out a chuckle. "It's given the episode a different look – not quite [1920 German silent horror film] *The Cabinet of Dr Caligari*, but we're getting there. Shafts of light come from the wrong places, and shadows are there for no reason, and I love that.

"Probably the only people who fully understood every element we were going for were the cinematographer [director of photography Stuart Biddlecombe] and I, and the assistant director, and [producer] Peter Bennett. Sometimes we'd be shooting something and the script supervisor would say, 'I'm not even sure how this fits into the whole story,' but it was clear in my head. That's why so much work had to go into preparation."

However, when the cameras began rolling on *Heaven Sent*, Steven hadn't finished writing *Hell Bent*. For Rachel, it was a leap into the unknown. "Oh, completely. I knew just enough about 12 to make sure that I understood the end of 11, and that was it. Even for us, Steven doesn't like spoilering anything! When you have a Steven script, all you want to do is give him absolutely everything that's on the page, and more. Some little clause in the middle of a scene in Episode 11 might mean something huge to Episode 12 or to next season, you're never really sure, so you can't say, 'Oh, that doesn't feel important, let's drop it.' It's kind of thrilling."

Although *Heaven Sent* was supposed to be this year's 'cheaper' episode, as Rachel pointed out last issue, "the location is a rotating mechanical castle, and it was full of visual effects," so that soon went out the window. Some of the smaller VFX "were either cut, or needed to be done inexpensively. When the scripts are this remarkable, you want to figure out solutions. What I learned on the *Nightmare* films was the combination of make-up effects, practical effects, and digital effects – which of them takes what amount of time, and cost. Sometimes there are three or four solutions to something. The combination of figuring out really interesting things that are doable... that's the challenge."

She cites as an example the Doctor's hand dissolving after he burns his old self to make a new one: "The effects guys were like, 'We need this much money to do it.' I was thinking, 'There's got to be a practical way to do this for less.' You know, Lush bath bombs? You can get kids' make-your-own-bath-bombs kits, so I got one of those for 10 quid. I poured it into a rubber glove, let it dry, and cut off the glove... and it looked like a hand, not a perfect replica, but... I filmed a demo on my iPhone, trying it out with different amounts of water, letting each hand crumble... I did this with my daughter one weekend, then sent the footage to everyone to say, 'Is this the kind of effect we could use?' And that's what we ended up doing. Really! You basically have this £20 effect, as opposed to a £3,000 effect – the basis of which is a Lush bath bomb!"

One of the episode's most challenging sequences was the Doctor's swallow dive out of the castle window, and his plunge into the water below.

"The effects guys said, 'Okay, go storyboard it.

Rachel Talalay and Peter talk through the scenes in *Heaven Sent*.

"When you have a Steven script, you want to give him everything that's on the page – and more!"

Peter Capaldi learns how to fly!

We want to know what you want it to look like.' I said, 'I really need to know what we can afford, or I'm going to storyboard these cool shots – he's flying through the air, it's going to be spectacular! – and then you're going to say, 'We can't afford to film in a tank,' or 'We can't afford to go on wires,' or 'We can't afford the visual effects, we can't do that, we can't do this'... and then I've wasted everyone's time. I had a falling sequence last year [in *Death in Heaven*, when the Doctor jumps from the presidential aeroplane into the TARDIS, mid-air], so they said, 'Let's do this one the same way.' I went, 'I don't want to.' I thought, 'I want to make this sequence different. How do I make it *better*?'"

This amazing sequence would ultimately be realised by *Doctor Who*'s skilful crew, including producer Peter Bennett and First AD Scott Bates, and a huge team of storyboard artists, stunt co-ordinators, directors of photography, special effects supervisors, and many more. But Rachel also is keen to mention someone who came up with a useful suggestion: 'John Smith' – a VFX whiz known for his *Doctor Who* videos created for his YouTube channel (*www.youtube.com/JohnSmithVFX*).

"I know 'John Smith' personally, through my daughter," smiles Rachel. "He's just brilliant. He's a young man who's done a small amount of professional work, not for a visual effects company; he just spends a lot of time on his own videos. I knew that he had a very good understanding of concepts and what can be done inexpensively, so I asked him, 'Do you have any thoughts on this falling-from-the-tower sequence?' He went, 'Oh yeah!' He had this concept of a rig. He said, 'This whole thing needs to be upside down. You need to use gravity to make it look like the Doctor is skydiving,' and he showed me some things he'd done in high school, using boards to hang people upside down – literally, two guys holding somebody upside down. I mean, we can't put Peter upside down on a board, and I didn't want to put him on wires, so I designed a rig – by 'designed' I mean scribbled something on a piece of paper – and gave it to [special-effects supervisor] Danny Hargreaves. I said, 'Here's the concept,' and Danny took it to the next level. He built this really brilliant rig."

For the shots of the Doctor plunging into the choppy, skull-infested waters, Rachel contemplated shooting dry-for-wet – a technique in which smoke, coloured filters, and lighting is used to simulate a character being underwater – as she'd done on *Dark Water* last year, for the skeletons in the tanks in the 3W Institute.

"No water was involved!" This year, *Under the Lake/Before the Flood* used similar dry-for-wet techniques for the ghosts in the water. "But in the event, for Episode 11, we ended up shooting in an actual water tank," Rachel reveals. "Normally, a tank shoot is very, very expensive, but we found a 'lesser tank', so to speak, not the Pinewood tank."

You just threw poor Peter in a pond, didn't you?

"Actually, we did consider that. We considered going to a lake, with a diver. But we went with a tank in the end. We had a stunt double in the tank, and then we filmed Peter against greenscreen."

Halfway through shooting *Heaven Sent*, the production team broke for two weeks to allow Peter Capaldi, Jenna Coleman, and Steven Moffat to nip to San Diego for the aforementioned Comic-Con.

"I had two weeks off," says Rachel, "so I started prepping Episode 12 in the break. I thought, 'We've made 11 so visual, the challenge is to make 12 equally visual, but in a completely different way.'"

Last issue, Steven and Rachel described the first act of *Hell Bent* as being like a Western. "*Doctor Who* had done a bit of that in a previous episode, and it hadn't worked as well as they'd hoped," continues Rachel, "so they told me to be careful." She looked to legendary Western director Sergio Leone for inspiration: "A lot of the visuals in Episode 12 are iconic Western visuals, even though some of it's Western Gallifrey, and there are things you always do – low angles scream Western – so you're always working to make it more iconic."

The Doctor arrives back on Gallifrey, and he's not in the best of moods...

How did Rachel like the planet of the Time Lords?

"Well, there are so many different versions of Gallifrey. It's completely intimidating. I referred to Steven all the time. It really is his vocabulary, the history of *Who*, and I can't even pretend to..." She breaks off guiltily, then whispers, "I actually grew up in America watching *Star Trek*."

You traitor!

"I know, God forbid! I lived in England for two years in the 70s, and I watched only *Doctor Who*, but two years isn't enough to measure up to Steven, who's watched it forever. But I did go back and watch some classic *Who* with the Time Lords and Gallifrey, as well as everything that's been done in new *Who*. I worried, because... I mean, some of it *is* campy. You have to get over campy, and turn it into lordly. It's a fine line. We took a lot of the classic elements, and tried to take out the bits that didn't quite work. Like, with the headdresses, if you put them in the wrong positions, the Time Lords just look like they can't move. I thought, 'How can we position them so that they look less... awkward?' We're within the Citadel, and you want to make it look as good as you possibly can, so you're interpreting what's been done in the past, then going another step – another *leap* – into Gallifrey. You have to take it seriously, and make choices based on what's right for the script. There aren't any sly winks in there."

Thrillingly, *Hell Bent* reintroduces us to a classic Hartnell-era TARDIS control room. In **DWM** 493, Peter Capaldi described this set as having "a Kubrick-y kind of vibe". Elsewhere in this issue, he says, "To go onto the TARDIS, *that* TARDIS, was wonderful. Everybody loved it, and it looked amazing. Some of the best days were spent on that set." But not for Rachel. She prefers the Twelfth Doctor's current control room.

"You've got 360 degrees of beautiful TARDIS," she attests, "and there's not a bad angle in there. ►

Rachel and her team examine the fruits of their labours.

◄ There's so much you can do with it. I love it." The Hartnell-era TARDIS, however, is "suited for television in the 60s. It's a nightmare to shoot on with today's cameras. The set is very low, so that they could get the old boom mics in, so I couldn't get any low angles [or the top of the set would get in frame]. I was absolutely tearing my hair out. 'I can't do this, I can't do that...' It was really challenging. It's actually rather a bland space, except for the roundels. We did a few lighting things, but it's still kind of... a white space. Also, that TARDIS console doesn't do very much. Peter had gone back and looked at what Hartnell did with it. He said, 'I don't like to steal – I have my own way of doing it – but I did want, at least, that vocabulary, and it still feels like this is my version...'"

The plan had been to modify the 60s TARDIS control room, but "we ran into problems, because there were some changes in the schedule," recounts Rachel, "so the set was needed much sooner than expected. The Art Department had to build it in, like, a day and a half – enough time to paint it white, and that's about it. Michael [Pickwoad, the production designer] was like, 'This is everything I can give you. I wish we could have done more.' But you can't tell. What's on screen looks gorgeous."

When **DWM** asks Michael Pickwoad for more details, he explains that they used the TARDIS control room build for *An Adventure in Space and Time,* the 2013 BBC Two drama that told the story of *Doctor Who*'s creation.

"We borrowed it from the *Doctor Who* Experience," he tells us. "We had to paint it white, because they'd painted it green, as it was in the 60s" – to render a more brilliant white on black-and-white TV sets. "Afterwards, we painted it back."

Rachel says, "The most magical moments were the first time Peter walked onto the set, and his face, and then the first time Steven walked on, and his face. They looked absolutely delighted. When we had any visitors to the set who were fans of classic *Who*, they couldn't believe that we were doing this. It means a lot to any fan to go onto the TARDIS set, but to have the modern TARDIS *and* the classic TARDIS right next to each other... people were in fandom heaven! Of course, the scenes we shot on the classic TARDIS were incredibly important, and incredibly dramatic, and Peter and Jenna were just spectacular..."

Hell Bent marked Jenna Coleman's *Doctor Who* swansong – sob! – after three years playing Clara Oswald.

"Jenna and Peter are very, very close," says Rachel. "They specifically asked us to try to finish the shoot with Jenna's final scenes – which we pretty much did, although, with all the schedule changes, it was difficult. You could tell that there was a lot of additional emotional stuff going on that day. They were very serious about what it meant that Jenna was leaving. They both felt it very, very strongly. It was my job to capture that magic the best I could.

"I know how Jenna likes to work, and I know how Peter likes to work: Jenna can get to her emotional place very, very quickly, so we did her close-ups first, her most emotional stuff, then it was easier for her to pull back, and Peter does better going later anyway. I learned that from doing the volcano scene in *Dark Water*. But that's just knowing the actors. You don't want them to burn out on the earlier, more raw takes. But if they'd come to me and said, 'No, I'd prefer to do it another way,' absolutely we would have done it in the order that they wanted. I want them to be happy."

Rachel and Jenna discuss the scenes in the diner, while Peter takes some snaps.

"Jenna and Peter specifically asked us to try to finish the shoot with Jenna's final scenes."

Our time with Rachel is almost up. Like a TARDIS disguised as an American diner about to disappear into the time vortex, Rachel has to head back into the grading suite – the long way round – to put the final touches to, let's face it, one of the show's finest ever season finales. Will she be back next series, to direct some more *Doctor Who*?

"I hope so. Yeah, I hope I haven't screwed up. I mean, I know they're happy with my work, it's just... there's always that fear that you've said the wrong thing at some point." In the meantime, Rachel's life is about to be consumed by *The Flash*. "American television is so fast, and so hard, and so much of a factory, often directors find themselves going, 'That'll do. That shot's good enough. Let's move on.' But there's no room for 'good enough' on *Doctor Who*. The visuals have to be powerful, the effects have to be great, and the acting has to be fantastic. Sometimes when I think, 'Oh, that *is* good enough, the audience isn't going to care,' an alarm bell goes off in my head – 'What's it going to be like when Steven says, "Do you have a better take of that?"' – and that's when you know to go for one more. Even when you're up against it. And you're *always* up against it," she laughs. "On everything I make now, 'good enough' is never good enough. Especially on *Doctor Who*, you have to be firing on all cylinders." DWM

Rachel doesn't need to tell Peter how excited he should look in this scene!

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The RETURN of RASSILON

Donald Sumpter has just made a return to *Doctor Who* for the first time in over 40 years – this time playing the legendary Time Lord Rassilon!

INTERVIEW BY **BENJAMIN COOK**

Hello, Donald. We're here to discuss your portrayal of President Rassilon in *Hell Bent*. Although, at the time of talking, it's over two weeks until the episode airs, so we're on MAXIMUM SPOILER ALERT!!!
"I don't think about that, because I rarely talk about what I'm doing anyway. [Laughs] It's private until it's aired. It's not as bad as American things. I was locked in an office with a script once. It was one of those American blockbusters. 'You can go in there and read it, in the casting director's office.' No telephones, nothing. It was ridiculous. But it's understandable that one doesn't want everything to come out too soon. Somebody always wants to spoil it for everybody, which is a shame."

Will you watch *Hell Bent* on the night it airs?
"I'm not a great fan of watching myself. It's always quite a difficult thing. Sometimes I leave it for a while, maybe for a year or so, but I'll probably watch this when it airs, because I'm following the series avidly. I'll be behind the sofa, but for other reasons: cringing at my own performance!"

What?! It's a fantastic performance. What drew you to the role?
"Well, how could one resist? It's something I've grown up with. I remember, very clearly, the first Doctor Who, William Hartnell, and I played opposite two Doctors many years ago. I was rather surprised that I hadn't been asked in the interim. When I was, I leapt at it. I mean, who wouldn't?"

You've appeared in the show twice before: as Space Station W3's Enrico Casali opposite Patrick Troughton's Doctor, in *The Wheel in Space* [1968], and as the Royal Navy's Commander Ridgeway opposite Jon Pertwee's Doctor, in *The Sea Devils* [1972]. So Peter Capaldi is –
"My third Doctor, yes. They were all terrific, but Peter is absolutely unique. He's fantastic. He's wonderfully austere, and that's quite rare in the Doctor. He's the darkest Doctor, which is why I found the confrontation between him and Rassilon really interesting."

The director, Rachel Talalay, talked about *Hell Bent*'s "iconic Western visuals"…
"Yes, well, she's American, isn't she?

Donald in *The Wheel in Space*…

… and *The Sea Devils*.

Rassilon takes on the man who won the Time War. Don't fancy his chances...

> **"With a part like Rassilon, you have to try to be outrageous and ridiculous as *honestly* as you can!"**

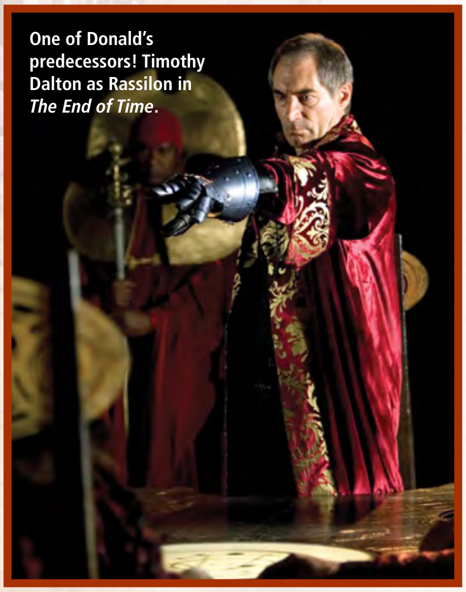
[Laughs] Rachel is brilliant. It does have a kind of Western, rock-'n'-roll taste to it, which is great fun."

Especially Rassilon's stand-off with the Doctor outside the barn, in the Gallifreyan drylands. Isn't Rassilon a bit of a bastard?
"He's a lovely chap! He's a very good man. What are you talking about, Ben? [Laughs] Everybody is the hero of their own lives. We don't believe we're bad, even when we're utterly wicked, so I always have a sympathy for the people I'm playing. Certain aspects of Rassilon are very commendable. I mean, we don't really know what went on in the Time War. We've been told little bits, we know that there was huge conflict, but we don't know, really, about Rassilon. He's a very ambiguous figure."

A few years ago, when I interviewed Timothy Dalton [see *DWM 417 – Ed*], who played Rassilon in *The End of Time* [2009-10], he described the character as "a soldier". What do you think: is Rassilon a lover, or a fighter?
"In our episode, one doesn't quite know how sincere he is when he wants *rebroussement* with the Doctor: 'Is this real? Does he really want peace? What is he hinting at about the things that were done in the Time War that should never even have been thought of?' You know, the Doctor and Rassilon, there's something very dark in both their backgrounds. They both recognise it, I think, but don't speak of it. They share that darkness – that shared guilt, almost – about what went on in the war. Rassilon is actually, I think, largely responsible for *saving* Gallifrey and the Time Lords. It's really attractive to play, because there are lots of undercurrents and levels. It's a good part, basically."

Rassilon was first mentioned in *Doctor Who* in 1976, in *The Deadly Assassin*. When you took on the part, were you aware of the character's 40-year association with the show?
"Yeah, and it was a nightmare. [Laughs] When I started looking into it, there were *thousands* of references to Rassilon. I had a look at the episodes that Tim Dalton did, because they were the most recent, and I took from the [*Hell Bent*] script. I had to take some things as read, like... what about this arm I'm waving around?"

The Gauntlet of Rassilon?
"It has the power to turn people to dust. Who's going to know that? The people who watch *Doctor Who* will know, from several years ago, that this is a deadly hand – or I trust that they will, or they'll just see this weird actor waving this hand around, which could be alarming. One assumes that it makes more-or-less sense. [Laughs] I trust the producers and the directors to not make it look ridiculous. One wants to play what's there as truthfully as possible. If what's there is outrageous and ridiculous behaviour, as with Rassilon, then that's what you do. You try to be outrageous and ridiculous as *honestly* as you can."



One of Donald's predecessors! Timothy Dalton as Rassilon in *The End of Time*.

Did *Hell Bent* feel like the same show you first worked on in 1968?
"Mm, a difficult question, because that was a very long time ago. It was a completely different process back then, of course, because we went in and rehearsed for a week or two, then we went into the studio and filmed it pretty much as live, like doing a play."

Was a week of rehearsals with Patrick Troughton as much fun as it sounds?
"Oh, such a delight! Patrick Troughton was a naughty pixie, really. He was great fun. Very, very kind. Jon Pertwee was as well. You know, I was in my 20s. They were both very generous to younger actors. They were good people, and that's part of the Doctor. Part of the Doctor's persona is this incredible generosity and warmth, and so they were both incredibly well cast. As for it feeling like the same show? There is a thread that does run through all of *Doctor Who*, and it's a golden thread, really: it's wonder. *Doctor Who* at its best says, 'Hey, what if...?' – and then takes you by the hand, on a wonderful, exciting journey... It's had that through most of its life. It's been sillier at times, or gets a bit crash-bang-wallop or whatever, but it always comes back to that sense of wonder. That episode the other day: what if somebody invented a machine where we didn't need sleep [*Sleep No More*]? That *is* scary. I mean, that's scary for adults. Children would probably go, 'Ooh great, more time to play,' but for adults watching, the journey that we're taken on, in our minds, is terrifying, and it's great. It's wonder. That's what *Doctor Who* conjures with, and that's been the same since the beginning, even with the tacky, wobbling sets. And the Cybermen!"

***The Wheel in Space* was one of your first TV jobs...**
"It was quite an early job, yeah. I'd been around for two or three years by then."

How has your outlook on life changed since then?
"Well, I'm still learning – much more so now, in fact. Back then, you thought you knew everything; now, you realise you know nothing. [Laughs] But one was equally insecure, in other ways."

What was your technique for acting opposite Cybermen and Sea Devils?
"Trying not to laugh! You had these terrifying Sea Devils coming through the submarine wall, and the poor buggers could hardly move. How can they be scary when you can push them over with your little finger? But of course you had to act it."

You can't have ever imagined that you'd still be answering questions about *The Wheel in Space* and *The Sea Devils* all these years later.
"No, not at all. Back then, serious actors wouldn't do *Doctor Who*. How times have changed! In that wonderful spin-off about William Hartnell – *An Adventure in Space and Time* [2013, BBC Two], was it? – he was going, all the time, 'I'm a legitimate actor!' That's how it was in the early days. The show wasn't taken seriously by 'real' actors, just 'candy floss' actors. But I thought it was a lot of fun to be in."

And now, of course, they're classics. It's TV history.
"I guess so. I'm pretty much TV bloody history these days, aren't I? [Laughs] But at least I'm still here." **DWM**

THE ZYGON GAMBIT

Peter Harness answers the call to write two new episodes...

> "You've got to reach the younger audience on a level of excitement and imagination. Then you've got to give the grown-ups something to think about."

THE **2015** TEAM! PETER HARNESS

The writer of this year's acclaimed Zygon two-parter discusses blobby monsters, moon-shaped eggs and nineteenth-century magicians...

INTERVIEW BY **MARK WRIGHT**

Peter Harness is a writer in between.

By the time you read this, Peter's latest episodes of *Doctor Who*, *The Zygon Invasion* and *The Zygon Inversion* (the latter co-written with Steven Moffat) will have been broadcast to great acclaim. But when **DWM** Skypes Peter at his home in Sweden, it's the day before the broadcast of *The Zygon Inversion*. It gives us a rare chance to see witness first hand the worries and concerns a TV scriptwriter endures at such a critical point in the life of one of their creations.

"It's odd when something's on because your work is done and you moved on to something else and stopped thinking about that script a long time ago," Peter explains. "Then all of a sudden there it is. It's weird, a bit like sending your kid away to university, and then it comes back and becomes quite consuming. It's on your mind the whole time it's being broadcast. If it's something like *Invasion* and *Inversion* over two weeks, or *Jonathan Strange and Mr Norrell* which was over seven weeks, it's quite hard to think about anything else! It's not necessarily that you're bothered about the press or people's reactions to it, but it's a big thing that's very close to you that you can't affect in any way now. It's a very odd thing to describe. It's usually quite a relief when it's been on and you can start thinking about something else again. This is worse in a way, because I'm a bit more nervous about the second episode..."

Nervous? How so?

"The first episode seems to have gone down well, and I find the second riskier because it's got those surreal sequences with Clara and it all hinges on a long dialogue scene. I like that, but it's an unusual direction to take the story. People are probably expecting bombs and guns and massacres rather than a conversation in a room."

As we know, Peter had absolutely nothing to worry about. *The Zygon Invasion* and *The Zygon Inversion* received near-universal praise from audience and press alike, with *that* final confrontation marked out as a defining moment for Peter Capaldi's Doctor. We'll come back to that brilliant, pivotal scene later. Is it difficult not to get swept along on a wave of praise when something strikes such a positive chord?

"It's nice, but you can't pay too much attention to it," Peter considers. "If that's possible! It gets in the way. You've got to be confident enough in your own tastes and your own strengths and weaknesses as a writer to judge it yourself. If you take too much notice of what other people say, then there's a danger you're writing to repeat that or to second-guess something. I don't think that's a good way to work in the long run.

"But," he adds with a smile, "it's nice when people say nice things, of course."

When **DWM** last spoke to Peter for the story's preview a couple of issues ago, he told us that Steven Moffat's brief for his latest *Doctor Who* assignment was for a "big international global conspiracy thriller" revisiting events seen in *Doctor Who*'s 50th Anniversary Special, *The Day of the Doctor*. *Invasion* and *Inversion* answer the uncertain question over what happened to the millions of Zygons looking for a home on Earth, the realities of maintaining a fragile peace treaty – and more importantly, what happens when it goes wrong. The 'nightmare scenario'.

Amongst what some might tag 'grown-up' themes of identity and extremism, issues that resonate with contemporary society, Peter's brief required him not only to revisit *The Day of the Doctor*, but also to place the shape-shifting Zygons at the core of the adventure. Is it a challenge to tell a fresh story for a modern audience that also features a monster that made its first appearance 40 years ago, in the 1975 adventure *Terror of the Zygons*?

"I think it's okay if *Doctor Who* dips into its legacy, as long as it never alienates the people who are not lifelong fans," believes Peter. "It's got a very rich world to cherry-pick things from, and if you can take one of those things without alienating people then that's good. Unusually we did that flashback to *The Day of the Doctor*, but I think you can get away with that. That's less than two years ago and it was also something that *everybody* watched. It wasn't as though it was an online episode or something that went out in 1984. Everybody watched that and everybody remembers it. Even if they didn't, that little recap is fine and it stands on its own.

Osgood comes under attack!

UNIT
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IFF TRANSPONDER

"If I'm writing anything I'm keen to make it work on several different levels," Peter says, considering the juggling act that any writer on *Doctor Who* has to perform. "But I think that's even more important when you're doing *Doctor Who*. Your first consideration is that it's got to be an entertaining show, and an exciting show for five-year-olds, seven-year-olds, 12-year-olds. You've got to reach out to their imagination first and foremost; wouldn't it be fun if there was a secret alien base beneath our school, or a couple of girls in the playground could be aliens?

"You've got to reach the younger audience on a level of excitement and imagination. Then if you want to carry the whole family with you, you've got to give the grown-ups something to think about. If you want to scare them, then it has to be psychological. You have to put them into situations which they would find scary and horrifying. For example, would I be able to shoot my own mother if she was begging me not to?"

It's fair to say that *Invasion* and *Inversion* achieve both levels of terror – and then some. If there's one sequence, featured in *The Zygon Inversion*, that adults and kids alike might have found utterly terrifying, it's scenes featuring the unfortunate Etoine. This tragic figure provides a representation of the Zygon desire just to live in peace, becoming a victim of extremist aggressors of his own kind. It allowed Peter the chance to deliver a particular kind of scare in Etoine's squelchy half transformation.

"I really love those sequences. It's something that *Doctor Who* used to do a lot, but the modern series has done less of it – that kind of body horror, and those hideous blotchy transformations. The human and the monster. It makes you feel sorry for him as well as being terrified of him, a key part of making you realise that there are many good Zygons. In terms of how they've realised that, it looks fantastic." ►

Peter Capaldi and Ingrid Oliver rehearse with a Zygon.

◄ Throughout our time talking, Peter is keen to stress his admiration for the *Doctor Who* production team, particularly director Daniel Nettheim, who he feels brought a real urgency to the story's visual style.

"I think Daniel's done a really terrific job, and he's shot it in a very unusual way. It's very floaty and fluid. The camera is always just floating about in mid air it seems, which is genuinely unsettling. It's a very original way to do it. He's directed up a storm I think, because he handles all those tense action sequences very well, but he does the personal stuff very effectively too. I think he's great."

> "It's not about Israel or Palestine – it's about shape-shifting aliens trying to be rehoused on Earth."

The Zygon Invasion and *The Zygon Inversion* are the latest work of Peter Harness' to see broadcast during a very busy period for the writer. His first *Doctor Who* script, *Kill the Moon*, was shown in October 2014, followed by an acclaimed seven-part adaptation of *Jonathan Strange and Mr Norrell* in May 2015 (see box out, opposite).

"There has been a kind of rumbling on reaction to *Kill the Moon*," says Peter, shifting focus briefly away from Zygons as we go back to his first episode of *Doctor Who*. "I guess it provoked quite a lot of discussion in different areas," he laughs.

The rumblings in question were the reactions to some of the scientific elements within the episode, which ultimately revealed that Earth's sole satellite was an egg containing a reptilian lifeform, which was seen to hatch in the story's climax. Peter is cheerfully philosophical about the episode's perceived controversies and whether the credibility of the science held up in the eyes of the audience.

"Looking back on it, I think that it was more shocking because it seems to start out as a different kind of story. It starts out as a horror story, a base under siege with a lot of hard sci-fi trappings. Then it takes a pretty dramatic left turn halfway through. I think that threw people. And for some people it was too much – but some people loved it as well.

"As far as the science goes, that's not something that I worry about either, because I do think if you started taking *Doctor Who* to task in terms of its science, then it's self evident that it's non-sensical nearly all of the time. Perhaps what I didn't do was to cover it with technobabble, which would have been easily done. But I didn't want to do that, and I didn't feel that I needed to. I was surprised about the science aspects and I was surprised by the political discussions. I was surprised that so many people latched onto it as an abortion metaphor, and I can certainly see that that's a reading of it. I've said this before, but if I wanted to write a story about abortion, I would have done it a lot more subtly than that! For me, I believe that drama isn't there to push forward any particular viewpoint and I wouldn't charge into something trying to sell any particular political viewpoint. Some think *Kill the Moon* is rabidly pro-abortion, and some people think it's rabidly pro-life."

As with *Kill the Moon*, *The Zygon Invasion* and *The Zygon Inversion* stimulated much discussion after broadcast, with many praising the allegory of modern-day issues of immigration and terrorism.

"I didn't get that brief and think, 'Okay, I'm going to write something very political,'" Peter

Ellis George as Coutney Woods in *Kill the Moon*.

Hermione Norris as Lundvik.

Jenna Coleman as Bonnie with Jaye Griffiths as Jac.

stresses, “but when I was thinking about how that situation might play out, and how those characters would react, it became clear that it has to have certain parallels with the world as it is. And clearly I did want to write something about that. The great thing about sci-fi and fantasy is that it allows you to do that without being boringly or stupidly specific. It allows you to talk about broad trends and bigger ideas and ways of human behaviour without saying this is an exact mirror for this particular thing. And I was keen to do that.

“But I’m also keen not to reach any conclusion. I don’t want to say ‘This is about Israel and Palestine,’ or ‘This is about Mexican immigration on the US border.’ It’s not what it’s about. It’s a story about shape-shifting aliens trying to be rehoused on Earth! It has echoes of these other things. It’s not the purpose of drama to answer questions; its purpose is to ask questions and to provoke debate and argument and thought. There’s a quote from [screenwriter] J Michael Straczynski: ‘A good story should provoke discussion, debate, argument… and the occasional bar fight.’ I’ve seen in some of the reactions to it that I’ve been accused of being a rabid leftie Marxist, as well as being a disgusting right-wing Conservative. That tells me I’m doing my job. It tells me that people are taking different things away from it. It’s annoying that people put those labels on me, but I think it’s good they do it in a fairly even-handed way, because they’re clearly reacting to things in the text.”

Is it the place of a Saturday evening family adventure drama series to tackle such weighty issues?

“It has to be an entertaining story, and it certainly has to work on those levels. It should reach out of the TV and into your little Zygon pod and there should be a two-way dialogue between you and the screen. It should ask questions of the viewer and make the viewer think.

“None of these questions have easy answers. They certainly don’t have answers you can provide on a Saturday teatime children’s show. People have been arguing about these things for millennia. So to try to reach any conclusion on them is mad. But they’re things that should be discussed and as long as it’s working for the whole family, the audience that’s watching it, I don’t feel it’s wrong for *Doctor Who* to discuss. *Doctor Who* has always done it. And so it should.

“I got a lot of my education from TV and I feel that it raised me in a way,” Peter continues. “I was very in love with television and what it could do. And still am. I’ve no real desire to work in any other medium. I love doing TV and I love the possibilities of it, so that I suppose is repaying a debt to what I felt it gave me when I was growing up.”

In terms of working practice, is Peter an outline or a script person? How did the Zygon adventure develop from that initial brief?

“I think I probably did a brief outline and we talked about it quite a bit and I wrote a first draft that changed a lot. If I’ve got time I write a first draft for myself and then redraft it before it becomes an official first draft that anybody else sees. On *Doctor Who* they are a bit stricter on outlines, so I usually have to do that. But they may not always bear a lot resemblance to what comes in the script!”

So the story forms up in the scripting process rather than the outline itself?

“I know that you should do outlines,” says Peter, almost, but not quite, grimacing. “I really try not to! I know it saves time, I know it’s a more sensible way to do it, but personally I find that I have to start writing to get into it because each script has a different tone, a different set of characters and a different world. I find that really hard to do unless I’m physically sitting and writing scenes. That’s not something you do with an outline. I find I enjoy the writing more than anything else and I don’t mind if it goes a bit haywire and I end up writing 10 or 20 pages of stuff that I don’t use, because it will have actually got me somewhere, it’ll have informed some bit of the world. It will have told me why it wasn’t a good idea to do this. It will have shown that that didn’t work, so I don’t think it’s wasted work in any way. I just don’t feel I could sit down and do all that work in my head before I was actually writing. It would then stop the writing process from being so enjoyable.”

Part of the writing process on the Zygon two-parter involved a co-writing collaboration with Steven Moffat for *The Zygon Inversion*.

“Steven’s often very busy writing himself, and I think he’s quite glad if you can be relied on to go off and do it on your own. He’s very present when you need him and he’s very supportive and helpful. And who *wouldn’t* want his input on your script? Because he always makes it better. Steven’s got a huge imagination and a huge brain and is very good at doing *Doctor Who*.

“I think what Steven does extremely well is to slightly reinvent *Doctor Who* every year. I think what he’s done with the series since Peter Capaldi took over feels like a complete reinvention – a whole new creative direction. I think that’s amazing. He just slightly takes it out of its comfort zone every year and tries something different. That’s part of the secret of keeping it fresh. I don’t know what he’ll do next year, but that’s one of Steven’s many great talents as a showrunner – he always keeps you on your toes.” ►

EVERY LITTLE THING HE DOES IS MAGIC!

Peter Harness spent much of 2013 and 2014 immersed in a very different world to those of *Doctor Who* and *Wallander* when he embarked on a lavish seven-part BBC adaptation of Susannah Clarke’s 2004 fantasy novel *Jonathan Strange and Mr Norrell*. Despite the complexities of the narrative, it was an assignment that Peter found impossible to turn down.

“It’s such a great story and the characters are so fantastic that I couldn’t not do it. I just thought there must be a way to turn this into a TV series. And if there isn’t, who cares? It’ll have been terrific fun to spend time writing it and trying to do it. If I’m ever adapting anything, I try to adapt things which are almost impossible to adapt. Because that’s what makes it interesting, that’s where the challenge is.”

Set in the early nineteenth century at the time of the Napoleonic Wars, the story revolves around the return of magic to England and the antagonistic relationship between the reclusive magician Mr Norrell (Eddie Marsen) and his flamboyant protégé Jonathan Strange (Bertie Cavell). Peter feels the popularity of *Doctor Who*, which returned just six months after the publication of the novel, has made it easier to get television of a more fantastical flavour onto screens.

“It was a very popular book in 2004 and it very nearly became a movie a couple of times,” continues Peter, “so it might have been just made on its own terms, but I think it’s much easier to get fantasy of this kind made nowadays because of *Doctor Who*, which really opened the door for a lot of other things.”

Bertie Cavell as Jonathan Strange and Eddie Marsen as Mr Norrell.

Jonathan Strange and Mr Norrell shared DNA with *Doctor Who* in other areas, calling on the talents of VFX house Milk to create the effects sequences, in particular the breathtaking Battle of Waterloo.

“They did a fantastic job on that. For all our big effects sequences, we knew that we had a limited amount of money to do them, so those were the things that were set in stone a long time in advance. We cut our cloth quite carefully in terms of what we knew was achievable and how to go about it. Milk excelled themselves. I think the Waterloo sequence is just astonishing – that huge, sweeping shot of the battlefield to begin with. They did absolute wonders.”

Would Peter like to drop the Doctor into a similar fantasy world to that of Strange and Norrell, a magical environment the Time Lord tends to shy away from?

“Yes, I was thinking that might be interesting to drop him into one of those alternative fantasy worlds like *Strange and Norrell* or Philip Pullman or David Mitchell. Usually he has to make sure everything’s got a scientific explanation. Everything is explicable. I can’t think of an instance when he’s said, ‘You know what, I don’t know what the hell just happened’. That would be interesting to explore.”

And how would the Doctor take to the flamboyant, almost Time Lord-ish figure of Jonathan Strange?

“I think he’d hate the hell out of him!” laughs Peter. “I don’t think he could cope with that. It would be like when the Doctor meets the Doctor. He’d probably have more in common with Mr Norrell!

“I’m very chuffed with it,” says Peter looking back on the experience of bringing the story to screen. “It’s nice to know it will be there now forever. I hope people will happen upon it by accident and then just sit and binge watch the whole thing. It was really made for binge-watching.”

Peter Harness

The Doctor teams up with Osgood.

The Zygons are put through their paces.

As a long-standing fan of *Doctor Who* going back to childhood, Peter was very happy this year's reinvention of the series saw the welcome return of a great *Doctor Who* tradition: the cliffhanger.

"We're a bit unused to two-parters – we haven't really had them an awful lot over the past five years – and they've come back as a slightly different beast, which is interesting.

"I think that when we were discussing the two-parters, they were keen on a gear change and a slightly different story in episode two to episode one, but I don't think that *Inversion* is a complete gear change. It isn't like *Under the Lake* and *Before the Flood*. *Inversion* feels like it's a continuation of the same story – it's a not a different world or different location. I suppose it's got a different tone. It shifts from the global to the personal and psychological. Maybe that's what stories do anyway – they attempt to focus as they go along, and they narrow down on something."

As Peter is more than happy to admit, *Doctor Who* has formed an important through line in his life from childhood to present day.

"I don't think I can overstate how important *Doctor Who* was to me as a child – or indeed now," he grins. "I suppose I connected with it when I was about three years old and it really did it for me, in a way. My imagination grew and so did my outlook on the world, I think. It helped me make the decision to do what I do – so that was a huge thing. I don't know whether I had that particular kind of personality anyway, or whether it had a bigger hand in shaping who I became.

"Obviously I read all the Target *Doctor Who* books. I read an awful lot, and I still read an awful lot. That's good advice to writers now – read a lot, and watch a lot of good stuff. You might start to understand what you like and how it works."

Peter confesses a great love for the Tom Baker era of *Doctor Who*, particularly the three series produced by Philip Hinchcliffe and script-edited by Robert Holmes between 1975 and 1977 – the very era that spawned the Zygons in all their blobby glory!

"I don't think *Terror of the Zygons* is my favourite," he admits. "I think probably out of those, my favourite is *The Seeds of Doom* [by Zygon creator Robert Banks Stewart]. But it's quite near the top of my list. It's just so spooky, and the Zygons are so horrible-looking. They're such an effective monster. I love Geoffrey Burgon's incidental music as well. I think his incidental music is some of the best that was ever written for *Doctor Who*."

Terror of the Zygons featured UNIT as commanded by Brigadier Lethbridge-Stewart – and this modern return for the Zygons keeps it very much a family affair. Once again UNIT is in the thick of the action, now headed by Kate Stewart (Jemma Redgrave) with able support from Jaye Griffiths' Jac and an AWOL Osgood – previously seen being popped at the hands of Missy in the 2014 finale. Thankfully, with it being established that there have been two Osgoods on the scene ever since *The Day of the Doctor*, she has been able to return, and Peter was delighted to pair Osgood with the Doctor. Or should that be Petronella and Basil?

"Osgood has changed, and she's grown a bit since *The Day of the Doctor*," says Peter. "And she's been given huge responsibilities. She's been through a lot. I think losing her sister was an appallingly bad experience for her and that's come to mean a lot more to her than any kind of panic over the Doctor. The responsibility that she has is the thing that means most to her now. So she's evolved as a character. I think just having her still be an impressionable fan of the Doctor, with no criticism or anything deeper than that, would have been a mistake. It's good she's moved on and deepened and grown a bit. And," he smiles, "I thought the fans would enjoy that the Doctor spends so much time with Osgood, because whether she ever steps aboard the TARDIS or not, I think that's a little relationship that people want to see more of."

"I don't think I can overstate how important *Doctor Who* was to me as a child – or indeed now!"

The Zygon Invasion took the Episode 7 slot in the recent series, the same space occupied by *Kill the Moon* last year. And now we're at the end of Peter Capaldi's second full series as the Doctor, how does Peter Harness feel the character has developed? Was there a different approach to writing the Doctor in these Zygon episodes?

"Yes, he's having fun! And he wears sonic shades. He plays the guitar and he's like a galactic punk. A punk uncle?" Peter suggests, hopefully.

Yes, we'll go with punk uncle.

"That seems like such a complete departure from last year, but it doesn't feel like it when you see it performed; that fun and insanity was just lurking beneath the surface. So yes, I did write him differently this year, I think we all did. He's less uptight and he speaks a bit more. He can have longer speeches and like I said, he plays the electric guitar, which is pretty cool. I think that's irresistibly cool. I'm sure some people can be grumpy about it, but secretly they think it's pretty ace!

Kate Lethbridge-Stewart (Jemma Redgrave) fires five rounds rapid.

"There's very little difference between me and my five-year-old self when I'm in the company of Peter Capaldi," Peter laughs when asked how you separate the *Doctor Who* fan from the professional TV screenwriter when in the presence of your childhood hero. "My five-year-old self who met Tom Baker, that's a pretty close approximation. I have to try to restrain myself from giving him a hug and saying, 'I love you Doctor!' Peter's love for the role shines through, and is completely infectious. He really feels like the Doctor to me. I think he's relishing every moment of it."

Equally deserving of praise, believes Peter, is Jenna Coleman, who for *Invasion* and *Inversion* took on the dual role of Bonnie, *aka* Zygella. "Yeah, she seems to be enjoying that, she seems to be having a lot of fun being evil. I think Bonnie's a great character for Jenna. I love those scenes where it's Bonnie talking to Clara. You can see what a terrific range she's got as an actress. And we're going to miss her, I think. She's really been a terrific addition to *Doctor Who* and I think she's my favourite companion."

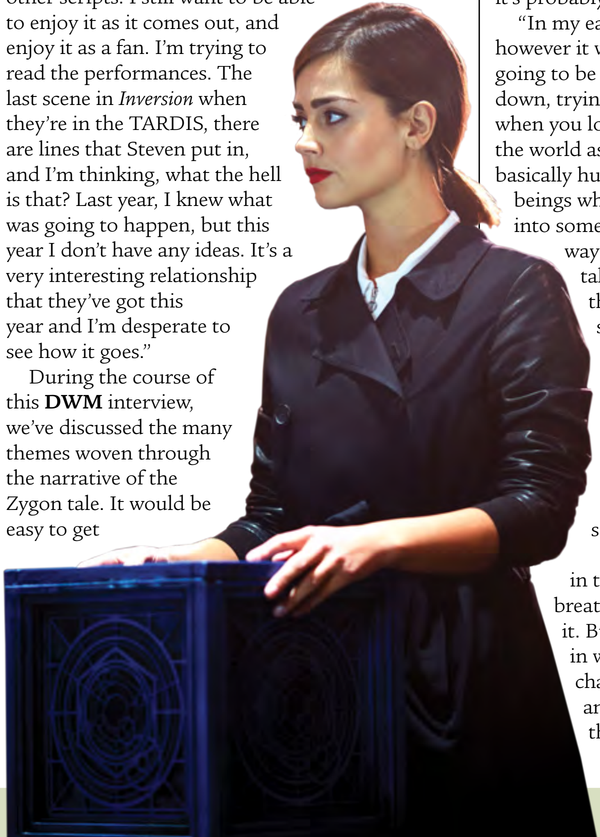
Was it a conscious decision to have Clara and the Doctor separated for much of the Zygon adventure?

"I think they're stronger when they're together, but Clara's now been a companion for a long time, so I don't think it matters occasionally to have them split up. In the old days, at the very beginning of *Doctor Who*, they used to be scattered to the four winds, and I think it's rather nice to see. Although Clara spends most of the episode inside a pod, you do get to see the inside of her head, and how she manages to bust herself out in that way. So, I think it's fine at this point in their relationship that they can be a bit independent from each other. I don't really know how the arc goes down in the rest of the series because I haven't read the other scripts, so I don't really know what's afoot."

By the time you read this, Peter will have been put out of his misery, but is this another case of the fan-versus-pro dilemma rearing its head again?

"Yes, but I think it's hard not to be spoilered about the big things," he concedes. "I knew that Jenna was leaving, but if it's not strictly necessary for what I'm writing, I try not to read any of the other scripts. I still want to be able to enjoy it as it comes out, and enjoy it as a fan. I'm trying to read the performances. The last scene in *Inversion* when they're in the TARDIS, there are lines that Steven put in, and I'm thinking, what the hell is that? Last year, I knew what was going to happen, but this year I don't have any ideas. It's a very interesting relationship that they've got this year and I'm desperate to see how it goes."

During the course of this **DWM** interview, we've discussed the many themes woven through the narrative of the Zygon tale. It would be easy to get side-tracked when really, Peter believes the story is ultimately about something very simple.



"Like the Doctor says, eventually all of these things have to end up with people talking to each other."

Is it fair to say the entire story hinges on *that* scene, back where it all began in UNIT's Black Archive beneath the Tower of London? A Time Lord using the power of words to bring two sides of a conflict together. No sonics, no tricks. Just words.

"It's something that interests me," Peter says of the scene, co-written with Steven Moffat, that caused him nerves one day prior to transmission. "Whether you can reason people out of things. And surely, whether you can reason people out of killing one another, whether you can make them see sense by the power of your arguments. I think if there's anybody in the universe who can do that, it's probably the Doctor.

"In my early thinking about this two-parter, however it was going to go, the ending was going to be about just trying to talk someone down, trying to talk somebody out of it. Really, when you look at everything bad that goes on in the world aside from natural disasters, it's just basically human beings behaving. It's human beings who presumably, no matter how deep into something they are, there's a psychological way of getting to them. There's a way of talking to them, or there's somebody in the world who could talk to them. And stop them doing what they're doing. Basically if, *en masse*, people decided to stop acting in such horrible ways, then the world would be a much happier place."

It's been called the Twelfth Doctor's defining moment, a speech that no other Doctor could deliver in quite the same way.

"Peter Capaldi does an amazing job in that scene," Peter agrees. "It's quite breathtaking to see what he does with it. But I think he was equally confident in what he was doing last year. The character was a lot less certain last year, and that's what everyone was saying in the initial meetings about this series, that he knows who he is now and he's a lot more comfortable in his regeneration."

With the story now broadcast, releasing Peter from that all-consuming writer's worry, he's now looking ahead to future projects, chief of which is the broadcast of the final series of *Wallander*. Based on the Kurt Wallander detective novels by the late Henning Mankell, Peter has served as the lead writer on the series, which stars Kenneth Branagh, since 2012.

"I signed up basically to do two series and then it was the plan to end it after doing all the novels. It's good to bring something to a definitive end, and it's nice to know that something isn't just going to carry on and on and on. But he's a very miserable character to spend time with and things can never go right for him for more than about five minutes. So I was quite happy to be saying goodbye to him after four or five years, on and off. He's not the most cheerful of souls."

For various reasons, Peter is unable to talk about the projects he has lined up, but assures **DWM** that he is more than gainfully employed for the foreseeable future.

"Yes, plenty of things in the future, and at least one of them will be of interest to *Doctor Who* fans," he adds mischievously. "I'm just plugging away at my stuff and hoping to do a *Doctor Who* again one day."

Having written a base-under-siege adventure in *Kill the Moon*, and an edgy urban global conspiracy with shape-shifting aliens in *The Zygon Invasion/The Zygon Inversion*, is there a particular flavour of *Doctor Who* adventure that Peter would like a crack at should the call come again?

"I'm just happy to do whatever comes along. I suppose that I've written a lot of historical stuff, so that might be something to have a go at. Having said that, I've written so much of that in other shows and genres that maybe I prefer doing the more futuristic or more modern stuff with *Doctor Who*.

"I think *Doctor Who*'s always got to be looking forward and it's always got to test the universe in some new direction because it can, as a show, do anything. As long as it's always doing something unexpected and something new then it's going to be around for another 50 years, another 100 years." **DWM**

THE DWM REVIEW OF 2015

What a 12 months it's been! We turn the clock back to January and relive what's been a very memorable year in the history of *Doctor Who*...

FEATURE BY **JASON ARNOPP**

JANUARY

We start the year covered in bits of tinsel and fake snow, hoping that this won't turn out to have been our last Christmas. We also very much hope that we don't, in reality, have a Dream Crab on our head.

Richard Atkinson hits the ground running in **DWM** 482 with his DVD and Blu-ray review of Peter Capaldi's first stretch of stories as the Doctor. 'This is undoubtedly the kind of *Doctor Who* that some have been waiting for: dark and uncompromising, I think they'd call it. Perhaps, for once, the question "Is this actually suitable for children?" is worth asking. There are lots of challenging ideas in these episodes – and that's a good thing for children, surely?'

Richard acknowledges that the season also had its lighter moments, and, 'has been a blend of the frightful –' (we're pretty sure he meant this in a *good* way) '– and the frivolous, like a lot of other good *Doctor Who*. It's been fearless in its pursuit of new scares and fresh ideas. Dare they take things any further in this direction?'

Good question, Richard. And even as we mull it over, *Doctor Who* is already spawning new material. The show's ninth series since 2005 barges its way into existence, shot by painstaking shot, from 5 January, with the launch-episode's intriguing title *The Magician's Apprentice* announced up-front.

POLICE PUBLIC CALL BOX

The Doctor and young Davros prepare for a take!

To celebrate the show's relentless drive, we place a recording device in front of Jenna Coleman, Clara Oswald herself. Following press speculation over Jenna's future with the show, Steven Moffat confirmed at a BFI screening of *Last Christmas* on 17 December that she would stay for the whole of the 2015 series.

"It's wonderful," says Jenna. "I get a whole extra series of stories with the Doctor! I couldn't walk away with the story left unresolved, and there's so much more to deal with."

She ain't kidding.

"Because the enigma of the 'Impossible Girl' is now out the way," she continues, "we get to see Clara in a different light. We see her everyday life and get to know her a bit more. What's been especially nice is being able to start afresh with a new dynamic with Peter."

Jenna's in a position to reflect on her time in the TARDIS with two Doctors. She recalls how "as soon as I got in a room with Matt [Smith], I came out very exhilarated and thought, 'This is great!' But Matt was leaving from the moment I joined up, so I knew we had limited time together." She describes how Peter Capaldi's arrival "has been really exciting, especially in the first few weeks, because the changes were so dramatic. Peter's Doctor is not a Doctor who runs around a room – he's a Doctor who makes the room come to him. And in that, the whole nature of the show shifts and changes."

Another very positive shift and change in the show's nature came last year courtesy of Rachel Talalay, who made her directorial début on *Doctor Who* with 2014's slam-bang finale, *Dark Water/Death in Heaven*. The experience, she says, left her "exhausted and exhilarated. Two days before finishing, it was my birthday and we were on the set of the TARDIS. They all came in to sing happy birthday to me with a TARDIS cake. I thought, 'Oh my God, this isn't happening'. I had mixed feelings: I was so anxious to be finished because I was so exhausted and I couldn't keep up this intensity, but I actually didn't want this to end. What if this was the last time I was ever on the TARDIS set?"

Thankfully, as the announced list of 2015's directors will reveal, this isn't the case. Hopping into a TARDIS ourselves, we journey back to the other end of *Who* history, for a pub lunch with Peter Purves, which sounds like something Alan Partridge might do. As our interrogator Matt Adams points out in this opening chapter of his two-part interview, Peter is 'one of the few people still alive who can offer a comprehensive, first-hand opinion on the second and third seasons of *Doctor Who*', in which he played Steven Taylor. The passing of time also leaves Peter entertainingly less inclined to sugar-coat the truth. Of producer Verity Lambert's successor John Wiles, for instance, Peter says, "I didn't like him at all. He wanted to get rid of me at one point, and I think in the original *Daleks' Master Plan* scripts Nick Courtney was considered as a replacement for me. I certainly felt it at the time, so I was very glad when Jean Marsh killed Nick!"

There's more talk of murder during our chat with 80s *Who* writer David Fisher, who confesses, "I was asked once why so many of my villains were villainesses. It was me killing off my aunts!"

ALSO THIS MONTH: Russell T Davies returns to TV with *Cucumber*, *Banana* and *Tofu*, his superb interlinked C4, E4 and online shows; Gareth Roberts' Virgin *Missing Adventures* novels *The English Way of Death* and *The Romance of Crime* are reborn as Big Finish audio dramas, having been adapted by John Dorney; and *Full Circle* TV writer Andrew Smith comes back full circle to Alzarius with his Big Finish audio drama sequel *Mistfall*.

Peter Purves: outspoken.

FEBRUARY

DOCTOR WHO
ARE YOU SCARED YET?

"The Doctor's marriage to Queen Elizabeth the First was unconsummated?" queries familiar-sounding reader Russell T Davies of Steven Moffat in **DWM** 483. Mr Davies goes on to cite dialogue from 2009's *The End of Time* Part One as evidence to the contrary.

"I said the marriage was unconsummated," replies Steven, pacing intently around inside his Mind Palace, "and so it was... but I never said the *relationship* was unconsummated. Yes, Russell! I went there. Even as you gasp and clutch the furniture for support, I am writing in the pages of **Doctor Who Magazine**, about *pre-marital shenanigans*! I realise you've probably never heard of such unsanctified naughtiness – glancing at your resume, I see you write mainly about fruit and veg for Channel 4."

This is banter! We're against banter! Unless, of course, it's banter with a director of the calibre of Paul Wilmshurst, who helmed *Kill the Moon*, *Mummy on the Orient Express* and *Last Christmas*. At one point, our editor Tom Spilsbury, a notorious gore-fiend, asks why onscreen blood is deemed 'too much' in *Doctor Who*, when soaps like *Casualty* or *EastEnders* regularly depict it. "We watch *Doctor Who* to be frightened," reasons Paul, "but not to be revolted. The realism in *Casualty* is possible because people bleed when they have road accidents. But if aliens attack you, and they kill you, *and* you bleed... it's probably gone a bit too far. But I don't know why! I think it works for the compliance people, so that's good."

We'll tell you exactly what works for *us*: sitting down with legendary *Who* director Waris Hussein, who opens up a treasure trove – well, technically a suitcase – of long-forgotten information about the missing 1964 TV serial *Marco Polo*. Aside from furnishing us with plenty of specifics about the recording – including set designs – this precious cargo lends great insight as to how a small BBC TV drama studio strove to recreate thirteenth-century Asia in the 1960s. It's an incredible find, which we'll continue to explore over the next two issues.

ALSO THIS MONTH: Designer Barry Newbery, who worked on many of the earliest *Doctor Who* serials – and whose 2007 visit to Upper Boat Studios we documented back in **DWM** 386 – sadly passes away, aged 88; **DWM** prints short story *The Ambush!*, which narratively paves the way for both the 1968 TV serial *The Web of Fear* and *The Forgotten Son*, the first in Candy Jar Books' new series featuring Colonel Lethbridge-Stewart; Big Finish presents Scott Handcock and David Llewellyn's *Gallifrey: Intervention Earth*, which features the interesting combo of Romana, Ace and Omega, plus Matt Fitton's snowy Fifth Doctor play *Equilibrium* and Justin Richards' creepy Fourth Doctor tale *The Darkness of Glass*.

Bonnie Langford: Unfulfilled.

MARCH

DOCTOR WHO
WHAT NEXT FOR THE TWELFTH DOCTOR?

"Peter Capaldi was accepted incredibly fast," says Steven of the public reaction to Doctor Twelve, when we sit down with him to catch up on all things *Who*. "We had the slightly odd situation – which I don't know that I particularly liked – that he was accepted even *before* he was on the screen. With Matt [Smith], everyone was sceptical. That was nice, in a way, because I knew how good he was and I knew it was going to work. But with Peter, although the vast majority of people seemed to hugely approve of his casting, there wasn't the feeling of unveiling something that was going to surprise you, of how good our new man was. Everyone *expected* Peter to be good."

Steven also lifts the lid on Jenna Coleman's momentary should-I-stay-or-should-I-go indecision. "I originally wrote her out in *Death in Heaven*. And then she asked me if she could be in Christmas? She came to the Christmas readthrough and did the write-out version – and again changed her mind. But the truth is I never wanted her to go. She's an amazing actress and never stops working to make Clara better. I was very happy to go the extra mile to make sure we could keep her."

It might also surprise some readers when Steven confesses to being shy – especially when it comes to fans chanting his name in public. "The only thing you can take from that," he says of public attention, "is to think, 'I must be doing *all right*...' I think most people might quite like the *idea* that they could get attention, but the actual moment that you're walking through an airport and people are chanting your name, you just don't know what to do with your hands or your feet or your face. I've been shy all my life. It overloads my brain."

Elsewhere this issue, former 80s companion Bonnie Langford explains that she left the show after two years because she felt unfulfilled by "all the red hair, shoulder pads and screaming," only to be drawn back in by Big Finish's all-powerful tractor beam. "As long as I don't have to just say, 'But Doctor,'" she stipulates, "and can be a little more influential to the plot, as a character, then that's all right."

Paul McGann drops by to tell us about the final chapter in Big Finish's *Dark Eyes* saga – and to give Peter Capaldi his Rassilon seal of sweary approval. "Peter's got this heaviness," he judges, "as well as this mercurial brilliance, which is exactly right. That's what the Doctor should be like, as I see it. If you're going to get a male to play the Doctor, it should be someone like him, because there's something slightly scary, slightly unnerving about him. You believe him, he's not a liar – just don't expect him to f***ing smile or do requests."

ALSO THIS MONTH: *Doctor Who Adventures* magazine relaunches in an all-new monthly guise; Panini publishes *The Essential Doctor Who: The Master*; BBC Books' *Doctor Who: Time Trips* gathers short ebook stories by the likes of Jake Arnott, Nick Harkaway and Jenny T Colgan in physical hardback form; BBC Audio releases talking books of 1976 serial *The Deadly Assassin*'s Target novel and Chris Boucher's 1999 BBC Books novel *Corpse Marker*; and Big Finish releases John Dorney's asteroid-based Fourth Doctor play *Requiem for the Rocket Men* and Jonathan Morris' E-Space drama *The Entropy Plague*. The latter stars the Fifth Doctor and proves there are still really cool words like 'Entropy' just waiting to be farmed for *Doctor Who* titles. ►

"Peter Capaldi's got this mercurial brilliance. That's what the Doctor should be like, as I see it."

EIGHTH DOCTOR PAUL McGANN ON THE TWELFTH

APRIL

Fantastic! Allons-y! Geronimo! Shut up! This month it's been a full decade since *Doctor Who* returned to BBC One. It's downright peculiar to think that such a thrilling and contemporary revival now induces mildly fuzzy nostalgia, but that's Father Time's relentless march for you, and **DWM** 485 catches us in the mood to celebrate. Let's be honest, we're always in that mood.

Jonathan Morris wields his trusty time-scoop to remind us of the tumbleweed-strewn PMPR era (post-Movie, pre-*Rose*) when *Doctor Who* was mostly 'a dead TV show, at best an object of nostalgia, at worst an object of derision. And now, here we are, 10 years after its return, and it's the biggest success story in TV. It's been the biggest success story in TV for 10 years.' He attributes this phenomenon to a variety of factors, such as 'young turks' like Russell T Davies, Mark Gatiss and Steven Moffat shoe-horning *Doctor Who* elements into anything they could; *Doctor Who* retaining its power as a widely-understood cultural reference; and perhaps even the fact that 'audiences were starting to miss *Doctor Who* too'.

We employ a remote-controlled Auton arm to wrestle *Rose* director Keith Boak to the carpet and make him break his 10-year silence. The result is his first in-depth interview about his work on *Who*, which also took in *Aliens of London* and *World War Three*. Keith describes the intense pressure of his shoots: having to hastily apply gaffer-tape and make-up to the back of Auton masks, trying to shoot the Slitheen to make them look scary, and relying on sheer luck to get London buses in shot during one *Rose* night-shoot. He also shares his one behind-the-scenes regret: "We needed to give Chris [Eccleston] a greater sense that the show – and his incredible performance – was working. It was his face up there, his reputation on the line, and I'm not sure we gave enough reassurance to him. He did such a good job."

Various performers share their memories from 2005, including Camille Corduri ("That really nice shiny moment that happened 10 years ago, it's like that flame is still burning and it'll never really die"), long-suffering creature actor Alan Ruscoe ("We started with rubber suits and Armani heads, and then it got worse and worse until they beat us into submission!") and Jo Joyner ("I always maintain that we never saw the extermination on screen, so Lynda could still be floating around out there, waiting for her chance to become an assistant...")

Our strenuous celebrations wind down with a luxurious soak in a big tub of *The Fact of Fiction* for *Rose,* with a wonderfully refreshing infusion of new Russell T Davies quotes. As Jonathan Morris stirs in some *Doctor Who* bubble bath, he soothingly purrs, "You can imagine the relief when *Rose* began, and the dummies slowly creaked into life, and I knew that, thank God, thank Russell, *Doctor Who* was being made by people who loved it, who cared, and it was going to be fantastic. For the first time in goodness-knows-how-long I was proud to be a *Doctor Who* fan. *Rose* was what *Doctor Who* had always looked like in my head, and now they'd finally put it on screen."

1914–1918
I · BARE · YOU · ON · EAGLES
WINGS · AND · BROUGHT
YOU · UNTO
MYSELF
POLICE PUBLIC CALL BOX

Ten years on from *Rose*, *Doctor Who* is still going strong.

DOCTOR WHO
DO YOU REMEMBER THE FIRST TIME?

That's not it for April, hell no, because we sneak another issue in! Yes, in **DWM** 486, we refuse to let Russell return to Manchester and instead quiz him to within an inch of his life about *Damaged Goods*, his 1996 novel which made him realise *Doctor Who*'s true potential.

He says: "*Doctor Who* – the 'classic' *Doctor Who* that I grew up loving – didn't, famously, blow up the world. Invasions and monsters would tend to limit themselves to the gardens of UNIT, or a country house. It's interesting, that sequence in *Damaged Goods* with the train blowing up, which then led to me destroying the entire city – that kind of liberated me, and then I carried that into *Doctor Who*. So I was thinking, 'Right, you can have a spaceship crash into Big Ben, you can do anything you like…'"

We haven't just randomly decided to shoot the breeze with Russell about this novel: Big Finish has produced a new audio version. Script adaptation technician Jonathan Morris takes time out from changing the novel's cocaine to "a made-up drug" to tell us, "This is grown-up *Doctor Who*. The character in the novel, and in my adaptation, is the Doctor who's written with depth: he's guilt-ridden, he's insecure. He's also kind of relentless. He's not going to hold back."

We open this year's second treasure trove of classic gems, as original cast member Carole Ann Ford browses through scrapbooks put together by the late Verity Lambert. As she revisits *Doctor Who*'s mixed early reviews from 50 years ago, she confesses that no-one on the production team played up the prospect of the show becoming a hit. "Well, how could they know?" she says. "In fact, everyone thought the complete opposite – a few-week wonder."

We press play to begin Charles Norton's three-part story on how *Doctor Who* navigated its way through the birth of home video and beyond. In these days of economical Netflix content, it's sobering to be reminded that the first *Doctor Who* serial to hit home video, *Revenge of the Cybermen*, was priced at £39.95, which would be the equivalent to over £100 now. It's also good to appreciate the relative artistic freedom *Doctor Who* enjoys these days, given that the 1977 serial *The Talons of Weng-Chiang*'s VHS release was delayed for three years thanks to ludicrous interference from the British Board of Film Censors.

ALSO THIS MONTH: Epic new **DWM** comic story *Blood and Ice* begins, featuring one prophetic scene in which Clara Oswald meets her double; Panini publishes a new **DWM** Special – *The Art of Doctor Who*; BBC Audio releases talking books of Christopher H Bidmead's *Frontios* novelisation and Mark Gatiss' novel *The Roundheads*; and Big Finish releases Matt Fitton's combat-crazy Fourth Doctor play *Death Match*, Nicholas Briggs' Cold War/Seventh Doctor tale *The Defectors* and *Jago & Litefoot: Series Nine*. Upon my soul!

MAY

DOCTOR WHO
MASTERS OF EARTH

Feeling ambitious in **DWM** 487, we chart the entire history of Earth, from its birth to its destruction. Our man Steve Lyons does this via the prism of *Doctor Who*'s myriad alien invasions, making the whole endeavour so much easier to manage.

Osgood – *aka* June's DWM cover star, Ingrid Oliver – tries out her latest Doctor-ish accessory!

"To have someone like Osgood in a sci-fi show is refreshing!"

In February 1989, students Adam Stephens and Matthew Brookes risked their health by venturing into the tobacco-smogged office of *Doctor Who* producer John Nathan-Turner, in order to interrogate him for their university magazine. The result is yet another treasure trove, as Stephens and Brookes bombard JN-T with all manner of detailed and often pointed questions about being a producer, his strained relationship with outspoken fans and *Doctor Who*'s standing at the BBC.

One of many memorable moments comes when the late producer is asked how he views his former script editor Eric Saward and simply replies, "I'd rather not talk about him." Vintage JN-T. The interview ends with him saying, "When I leave, I shall watch the show with great affection, and be fascinated with the progress, and try not to have any sort of critical eye – although deep down I'll be, 'I wouldn't have done that!' I'd like to end with, on the whole, a grab-bag of wonderful memories." Sadly, of course, John is unaware that he's currently prepping the show's final TV season for what will be 16 years. He'll pass away at the age of 54, three years before *Doctor Who*'s return.

ALSO THIS MONTH: The *Doctor Who Symphonic Spectacular* kicks off a clutch of UK dates at London's Wembley Arena; BBC Worldwide launches *The Doctor Who Fan Show* on YouTube, fronted by superfan Christel Dee, which delivers upbeat analysis every Friday; Panini releases collected Seventh Doctor comic *The Good Soldier*; BBC Books publishes a novelisation, in print and on audio, of 1979 serial *City of Death*, written by James Goss; Richard Franklin reads the talking-book adaptation of Mark Gatiss' novel *Last of the Gaderene*; Big Finish issues two stories by Alan Barnes – *Last of the Cybermen* (Sixth Doctor) and *Suburban Hell* (Fourth Doctor) – plus David Llewellyn's box set *The Worlds of Big Finish*, which gathers various *Who*-related characters like Bernice Summerfield and Iris Wildthyme for a caper spanning thousands of years.

JUNE

DOCTOR WHO
FAN-TASTIC!

"When I died," says Ingrid Oliver, *aka* Petronella Osgood, in **DWM** 488, "I thought, 'Oh, that's a shame.' I felt it would be too lucky to come back for a *third* time!"

Happily, Osgood has all the luck in the universe. When Graham Kibble-White visits the set of the Zygon two-parter to meet the resurrected Ingrid, she gets straight to the heart of Osgood's enduring appeal with fans. "I love sci-fi and big films like *Guardians of the Galaxy*, but there aren't very many relatable female characters in them. To have someone like Osgood who's not an amazing kung fu artist or, you know, wearing a spandex outfit, is refreshing. And, having seen the fans, it's a 50-50 gender split, which I'm sure wasn't always the case. So it makes sense that they'd want to see people on the screen who represent them."

Simon Guerrier enjoys an explosive chat with special effects supervisor Danny Hargreaves, whose company Real SFX has been contracted to the show since 2008. Naturally, as well as documenting Danny's countless award-winning triumphs, **DWM** wants to hear about his very rare mishaps, such as singeing the Doctor's hair ("David Tennant always got closer to the effects than I ever wanted him to – he loved it!") or melting part of the TARDIS console ("If you look at it now, you can see it's still a bit scorched").

We also talk to the great actor David Warner, who played Professor Grisenko in 2013's *Cold War* and an alternative incarnation of the Doctor for Big Finish's *Unbound* line. David addresses long-standing rumours that he once turned down an offer to become the TV Doctor, informing our reporter Mark Wright, "My agent called me and asked, would I be interested in being *considered* for or having a meeting about playing the Doctor. But I wasn't available at the time, so that's the truth. Maybe you can thank me for Tom Baker's success… although I think they went the right way, don't you?"

ALSO THIS MONTH: The Queen hands Steven Moffat an OBE, making him "an Officer of the most Excellent Order of the British Empire"; Simon Guerrier and Dr Marek Kukula's non-fiction book *The Scientific Secrets of Doctor Who* bubbles up out of BBC Books' test tubes; Panini publishes *The Essential Doctor Who* Issue 5: *Monsters*; and Big Finish's releases include the Bernice Summerfield box set *The Triumph of Sutekh*, Eddie Robson's timeline- ►

◄ tampering Fifth Doctor story *The Secret History*, Jonathan Morris' splendidly-titled Fourth Doctor fear-fest *The Cloisters of Terror* and *The First Doctor Volume One* box set by Martin Day, Ian Potter and that ubiquitous-in-June fellow Simon Guerrier.

JULY

DOCTOR WHO
HIT FOR SIX!

We're delighted to put the beaming Sixth Doctor on the cover of **DWM** 489, to mark the very special Big Finish releases *The Last Adventure*. Due out on 30 September, this box set contains Colin Baker's final *Doctor Who* stories, in purely chronological terms at least. While the TV series denied us the Sixth Doctor's regeneration, this collection swoops in to save the day.

"I think it's important for *others* that there is closure," Colin says. "It isn't important for me. The open wound worked for me, for the last 30 years. But I quite understand that fans want all their eggs in a nice row, and all in the right shape, and there's a little nobbly bit in the middle they want to straighten out. And I am that little nobbly bit!"

Since Big Finish has devoted many years to impressively rehabilitating and fleshing out the Sixth Doctor's unfairly-maligned TV persona, Colin says he was happy to let them create *The Last Adventure* without his input. "The one thing I've discovered about Big Finish is that any suggestions or caveats I had might stop them doing what they do best, which is writing really good scripts." With a laugh, he adds, "Obviously, if I'd had a caveat, it would be, 'Can you make them love me?'"

Kill the Moon's Ellis George re-enters Earth's atmosphere just long enough to share her experiences of being the first woman on the moon as schoolgirl Courtney Woods, while our own John Williams profiles the often surprising life story of legendary *Doctor Who* writer Malcolm Hulke. And the **DWM** 2014 *Season Survey* results are in, which means accolades for the likes of Jamie Mathieson (Best Writer and Best Episode), Samuel Anderson (Best Male Guest Star), Michelle Gomez (Best Female Guest Star and Favourite Villain) and Douglas Mackinnon (Best Director).

ALSO THIS MONTH: On 9 July, a San Diego Comic-Con panel featuring Steven Moffat, Peter Capaldi, Jenna Coleman and Michelle Gomez delights 7000 fans (not least when Steven says he'd be well up for a *Doctor Who*/*Sherlock* crossover) and launches a new *Who* trailer full of tantalising sights; Scottish novelist AL Kennedy comes to *Doctor Who* with BBC Books' Fourth Doctor novel *The Drosten's Curse*; Jon Culshaw reads the novelisation of 1975's *The Ark in Space* for BBC Audio; Jonathan Morris again whacks the *Doctor Who* Titles ball out of the park with *We are the Daleks*, his 80s-set Seventh Doctor story for Big Finish, which also releases Nicholas Briggs' chilling Fourth Doctor tale *The Fate of Krelos*.

AUGUST

DOCTOR WHO
BEST ENEMIES!

The Twelfth Doctor and Missy stand back to back on the front of **DWM** 490, as we task Steven Moffat with unravelling the enigma of their love-hate relationship. "The Master has always been the Doctor by other means," Steven says. "He/she is the most Doctor-like character in *Doctor Who* other than the Doctor himself. The one tiny difference is... she's insane! It's always been the case that they're sort of best friends, and that they sort of like each other. It's just a friendship between a vegetarian and a hunter!"

Michelle Gomez makes her comeback as Missy in *The Magician's Apprentice*.

"They're sort of best friends... it's just a friendship between a vegetarian and a hunter!"

Steven also treats us to an overview of the oncoming storm of episodes, which seem to offer a wealth of two-parters. At no point during this conversation does he say, "Oh, just FYI: Clara dies this year when a raven rips her soul out." Instead, he notes that the two-part format lends *Doctor Who* "a kind of scale that you can't have in 45 minutes. The 45-minute version of *Doctor Who* has served us well for 10 years – let's not diss it! – but maybe we've got to the point where we're slightly growing past it. Also, two-parters give us the chance to stop and breathe for a moment with the characters." Especially when one episode only has only one speaking role – the Doctor! Steven tantalisingly paints the amazing *Heaven Sent* (or 'Episode 11', as it's currently still known) as "possibly the most difficult script I've ever had to write. Shockingly hard. It was horrific, actually. I nearly went to pieces doing it!"

James Stoker unveils *The Secret Diary of The Master* – although frustratingly the super-villain's precise age is not revealed *à la* Adrian Mole - while Steve Lyons looks into the sticky business of why everyone in *Doctor Who*, and sci-fi in general, speaks English. And the Time Team witness the Tenth Doctor's regeneration into a man who looks exactly like Matt Smith, at the climax of 2010's *The End of Time* Part Two, concluding excitedly, "New Doctor! The old thrill kicks in! What other TV show can do this? Hurrah for *Doctor Who*!"

ALSO THIS MONTH: Season opener *The Magician's Apprentice* receives its world première in Edinburgh on 26 August (and yet spoilers are amazingly scarce prior to transmission – well done, everyone); Panini releases **DWM** Special 41: *The Music of Doctor Who*; BBC Audio issues the first of its original Twelfth Doctor adventures in the shape of James Goss' *The Gods of Winter*, plus a talking book adaptation of Paul Cornell's much-loved 1995 novel *Human Nature*; and Big Finish introduces the Fourth Doctor to 60s Cybermen in Nicholas Briggs' *Return to Telos*, while Mike Tucker writes his first Seventh Doctor/Mel story in *The Warehouse*.

SEPTEMBER

On Friday 18 September, Jenna Coleman makes DJ Nick Grimshaw pull one of his "Amazeballs!" facial expressions when she reveals she's already left *Doctor Who*. Speaking to the *X Factor* judge on his BBC Radio 1 show, Jenna says, "I have left the TARDIS. I've filmed my last scenes. It was emotional." She adds that her exit, "is going to happen some point this season. Hopefully people will love it. I think it's really cool." We assume Jenna's referring to the whole 'Cheating death by exploring all of time and space with Ashildr' thing here, rather than the whole 'Dead on the cobbles' thing.

The following day at 7.40pm, steamy-fresh *Doctor Who* explodes onto publicly funded screens! This is properly lavish widescreen cinema, with Daleks, the return of Missy, a new villain made of snakes – and Davros as we've never seen him before.

Visiting the set of *The Magician's Apprentice* and *The Witch's Familiar* for **DWM** 491, Benjamin Cook tiptoes nimbly around hand-mines in order to goggle at the fan-slaying array of Daleks and reassure a concerned Peter Capaldi that his Hartnell-tribute plaid trousers aren't "too much". Peter dubs these episodes "great. They feel like movies. What a laugh, huh? It's quite spectacular *Doctor Who*. You could have it on Christmas Day, honestly, even though it's not a Christmas episode."

Elsewhere in Ben's feature, Steven blithely fields a couple of questions about Gallifrey, as if we won't be seeing it this series. Crucially, he doesn't lie: he merely suggests the Doctor isn't naturally *looking* for his home planet. Now that's raw cunning.

Steven also defends the politically-beleaguered hospital where *Doctor Who* was born, *aka* the BBC. "There isn't, and has never been, much of a coherent argument against the BBC, and there's really no evidence that that of all the things people are complaining about in Britain, the BBC is one of them. I don't even think people with not much money are talking about 'that damn licence fee'. What the government is doing is grotesque, and it's silly."

In the first half of a two-part feature, Simon Guerrier quizzes Kate Walshe of Millennium FX, keen to glean the secrets behind the team's awesome prosthetic effects. He learns that Kate and co take pride in grossing out the show's own crew. "When we did the Crooked Man in *Hide*," she recalls, "that freaked everyone out. There was the nicest guy in the costume, he was all, 'Oh, hello!' to everyone. But people couldn't bear it. They found it so creepy and kept away. So we must have done a good job."

Jonathan Morris presents *100 Impossible Facts About Clara Oswald* ('She's five foot one and, according to Strax, has an "enviable spleen"...'), while Dan Tostevin meets Tim Treloar, the man controversially recast as the lead in Big Finish's *The Third Doctor Adventures Volume One*. Mark Wright investigates the video game Lego Dimensions which features everyone's favourite Time Lord, and Simon Guerrier collars costume designer Ray Holman, who designed the Eleventh Doctor's look and is back this series. Among Ray's revelations is that Osgood's question-mark tanktop was sourced from a cosplay company! That's just so meta, it hurts our minds.

ALSO THIS MONTH: Panini puts out *The Eye of Torment*, the first collection of Twelfth Doctor comic strips; BBC Books publishes Justin Richards' correspondence-tastic *The Time Lord Letters*, plus a trio of Twelfth Doctor novels, namely Gary Russell's *Big Bang Generation*, Una McCormack's *Royal Blood* and Trevor Baxendale's *Deep Time*; the first volume of epic hardback partwork *Doctor Who: The Complete History* hits shops; BBC Audio works its talking-book magic on the novelisations of 1985's *The Two Doctors* and 1989's *The Curse of Fenric*; across the US, *Dark Water* and *Death in Heaven* receive special 3D screenings for two nights only; and Big Finish's releases include David Llewellyn's *Torchwood: The Conspiracy*, the first in a brand new series starring the Hub crew.

OCTOBER

There are an astonishing five new episodes of *Doctor Who* on TV this month. It's all lakes, ghosts, floods, loveably inept Vikings, Benny Hill, the Doctor's face, an immortalised girl, highwayman hi-jinks, attempted hangings, rocket launchers and the nightmare scenario of a previously-brokered peace treaty between Earthlings and shapeshifting aliens being shattered by a splinter group. Phew.

We go Zygon bonkers on the cover of **DWM** 492, while writer Peter Harness describes his two-parter as "an exciting alien invasion urban thriller, featuring some pretty kick-arsey shape-shifters and a few fan-favourites."

Some loser named Jason Arnopp tests the patience of *Under the Lake/Before the Flood* writer Toby Whithouse by subjecting the man to an in-depth grilling about his life and career. Toby admits he reluctantly doesn't believe in an afterlife, recalls hiding in a garden at the age of five, and employs equal candour while cataloguing his writerly triumphs and mistakes.

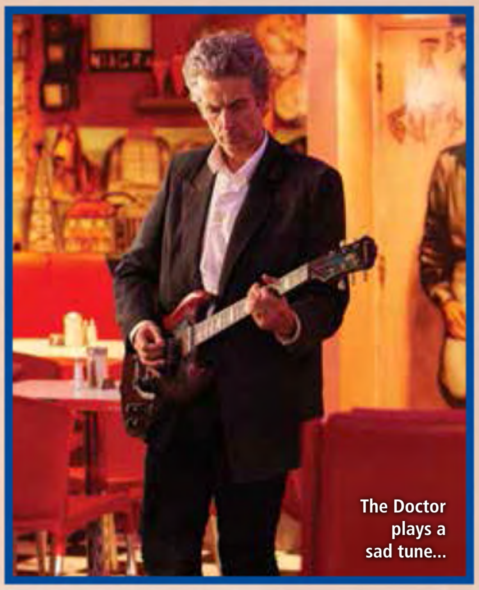
Elsewhere, we celebrate Big Finish's most epic adventure yet, *Doom Coalition*. Starring Paul McGann, it will span a remarkable 16 hours and introduce fascinatingly deranged new villain, the Eleven (Mark Bonnar).

ALSO THIS MONTH: Following a two-and-a-half year delay, *nothing in ze world* can stop *The Underwater Menace* from finally surfacing on BBC DVD; Panini releases *The Essential Doctor Who* Issue 6: *Davros and Other Villains*; BBC Audio continues its Twelfth Doctor audiobook series with George Mann's *The House of Winter*; BBC Books issues the chunky tome *Impossible Worlds* by Mike Tucker and Stephen Nicholas; and Big Finish releases include Justin Richards' 1942-set drama *The Forsaken* (Second Doctor) and Marc Platt's *Planet of the Rani* (Sixth Doctor), which finally introduces us to the planet Miasmia Goria, mentioned on TV 30 years ago!

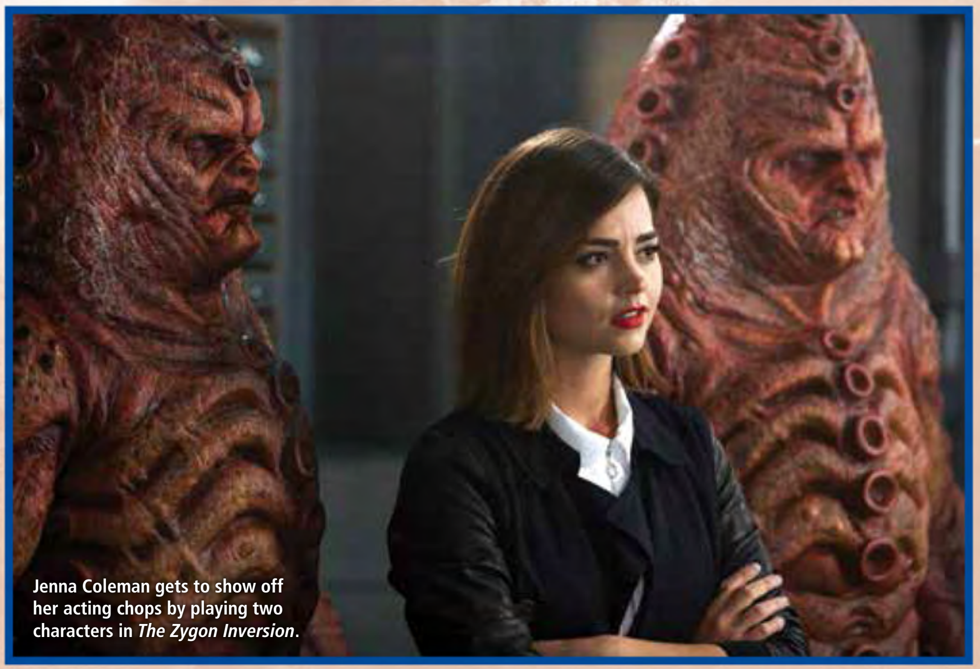
NOVEMBER

The Doctor delivers an astonishing speech about the madness of war, our ever-experimental show splices itself with *The Blair Witch Project*, Clara shockingly faces the raven, and the Doctor spends a mind-boggling four-and-a-half billion years trapped inside a confession dial.

All told, it's a phenomenal month for *Doctor Who*, with the *Doctor Who* Festival thrilling thousands at London's ExCeL, and some remarkable developments over at Big Finish. Not only is Andrew Smith and Matt Fitton's *UNIT: Extinction* box set out this month, starring Ingrid Oliver as Osgood and Jemma Redgrave as Kate Lethbridge-Stewart, along with countless Autons, but **DWM** 493 brings the news that David Tennant and Catherine Tate will reprise their TV roles in three forthcoming audio dramas!



The Doctor plays a sad tune...



Jenna Coleman gets to show off her acting chops by playing two characters in *The Zygon Inversion*.

In **DWM** 493, Jamie Mathieson reveals his stand-up comedy past, Catherine Tregenna reveals why she would have been forced to move house if *The Woman Who Lived* had been rubbish, Sarah Dollard reveals her hope that kids everywhere will launch frenzied Trap Street hunts, and Steven Moffat reveals the difference between arch villains the Master and Davros: "Missy is the lover of chaos, whereas Davros is a serious-minded individual. He's *dreadful*, but according to his own morality, he's a hero." Davros also pops up this issue in the year's funniest *Doctor Who* comic strip, courtesy of Lew Stringer's *The Daft Dimension*. And in Jacqueline Rayner's *Relative Dimensions* column, she relates her ever-perceptive twins' joint observation that the young Davros we saw this series might not have been *the* Davros. An uncertain disturbance ripples through fandom...

ALSO THIS MONTH: *Doctor Who* employs its first ever umlaut, in the title of Ian Edginton's *Shield of the Jötunn* from Big Finish, which also unleashes Emma Reeves' *Torchwood: Forgotten Lives* and the extraordinary cast-crossover of Justin Richards' *Jago & Litefoot & Strax*; and Puffin hops aboard the colouring book craze with, you guessed it, *Doctor Who: Colouring Book*.

DECEMBER

Star Wars, Schmar Wars. At the end of time, a lone guitar-slinger returns home, ostensibly looking for revenge, but with a crafty trick up his sleeve. What a tremendous finale to a tremendous year in *Who*. And what a great Christmas Special we still have in store, as the Twelfth Doctor and River Song's timelines finally cross.

December's releases include BBC Audio's latest Twelfth Doctor story *The Sins of Winter* by James Goss, and the Big Finish plays *Only the Monstrous* (War Doctor, by Nicholas Briggs), *All Consuming Fire* (Seventh Doctor, by Andy Lane) and Joseph Lidster's *Torchwood: One Rule*. Furthermore, I can sensationally reveal that **DWM** 494 features a mind-blowingly brilliant and insightful *Review of 2015*, so be sure to look out for that.

As for the rest of this month's events? I'm writing this in November, so kindly focus upon the Psychic Paper provided, where you'll see a list of the major *Who* happenings thus far in December.

Have yourself the kind of Christmas of which historians will whisper in awe! **DWM**

☠ MURDERER! ⚰😭👎

THE RAVEN OF DEATH

THE 2015 TEAM! SARAH DOLLARD

She killed Clara Oswald! How could she? We tracked down writer Sarah Dollard to put a Chronolock on her. (Actually we didn't. We're too nice.)

INTERVIEW BY **JASON ARNOPP**

Fittingly, Sarah Dollard meets **DWM** in a Trap Street pub, on an unremarkable Central London side-street we'd never noticed before.

It's 14 October 2015, five weeks before the Australian writer's *Face the Raven* airs on BBC One and melts the internet. Because we really don't want to forever become The Idiots Who Got Overheard In A Public Place And Breached *Doctor Who* Security, we settle in a shady nook, eye our fellow drinkers with caution and only employ the pre-agreed codename for Clara Oswald.

Oh my God, Sarah: you killed Kenny!

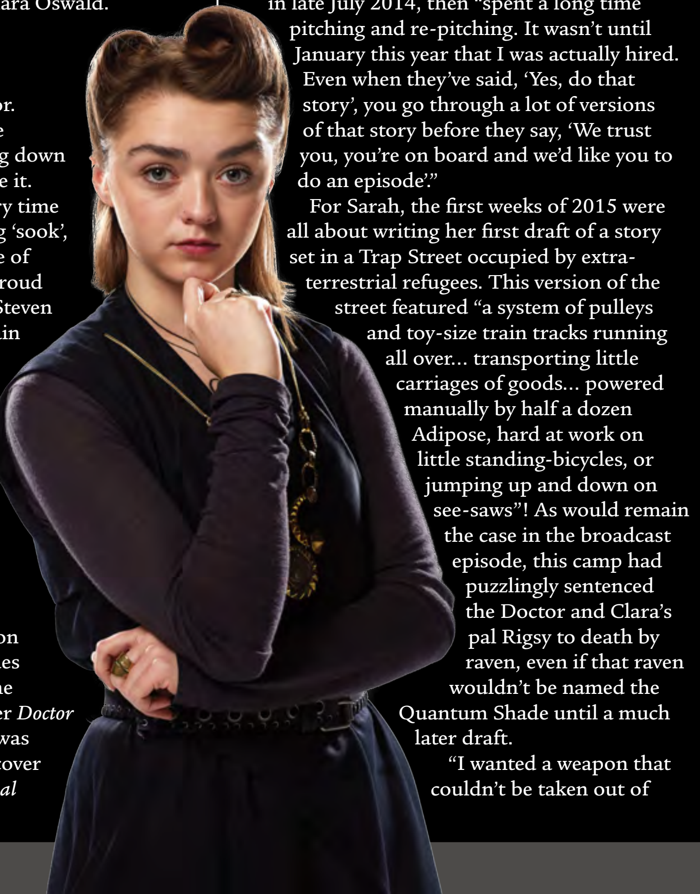
"I know!" she says, with comically incredulous horror. "I'm a terrible person, I hate myself. I had tears streaming down my face the first time I wrote it. Then I made myself cry every time I edited it. I mean, I *am* a big 'sook', so that in itself was no judge of quality… but I'm also very proud that it made [showrunner] Steven Moffat emotional on the train when he read it."

It's fair to say that, aside from canny fans who became suspicious after hearing the Doctor would be alone in the following episode, the majority of viewers were shocked when Clara's dead body hit the Trap Street cobbles – especially as they didn't know a time-extraction was on the cards two episodes later. At one point during the development of her first-ever *Doctor Who* episode, Sarah herself was similarly blown away to discover that it would depict the *actual death* of Jenna Coleman's character. Read on, for the full story behind how Clara Oswald came to *Face the Raven*…

Sarah's *Doctor Who* début followed years of working in various roles on the likes of *Neighbours*, *Merlin*, *Primeval* and *Being Human*. Originally titled *Trap Street*, her episode was once positioned earlier in the 2015 series. It also started out as a standalone tale, which featured neither Clara's untimely demise nor Ashildr, played by Maisie Williams.

Sarah had her first *Doctor Who* pitch meeting in late July 2014, then "spent a long time pitching and re-pitching. It wasn't until January this year that I was actually hired. Even when they've said, 'Yes, do that story', you go through a lot of versions of that story before they say, 'We trust you, you're on board and we'd like you to do an episode'."

For Sarah, the first weeks of 2015 were all about writing her first draft of a story set in a Trap Street occupied by extra-terrestrial refugees. This version of the street featured "a system of pulleys and toy-size train tracks running all over… transporting little carriages of goods… powered manually by half a dozen Adipose, hard at work on little standing-bicycles, or jumping up and down on see-saws"! As would remain the case in the broadcast episode, this camp had puzzlingly sentenced the Doctor and Clara's pal Rigsy to death by raven, even if that raven wouldn't be named the Quantum Shade until a much later draft.



"I wanted a weapon that couldn't be taken out of someone's hands," she says of the terrifying bird that makes *The Pirate Planet*'s Polyphase Avatron look endearing, "and one which could only be used by one person. I liked the idea of putting a mark on someone – almost like you were putting bait on them, then letting the monster out of the cage! Then I thought about an intangible monster that could go through a person's body and take their soul with it. Making it airborne seemed like the most scary thing, plus the fact that no matter where you ran it could find you. So it could go through walls.

Clara's two killers!

"The camp was run by an original character," she adds. "An older female alien called the Mayor. That seems like years ago now! Rigsy and Anahson's stories were both really important in that version: Rigsy was a father and Anahson had lost her mother Anah, so they made a connection over that throughout the episode. Rigsy saw Anahson as a stand-in for his child at home and knew exactly what had been lost in Anah. So I was really happy with the story, even when it had a more limited frame."

How did that draft end?

"The regime on the street stayed in place. Even though Clara wasn't happy with the situation, the Doctor saw the need for a kind of dictator-type character who wasn't kind or particularly wise but served a purpose. The Doctor wasn't going to stick around and make sure all of these creatures were safe from each other and from humanity, and that humanity was safe from them, so he had to leave this imperfect regime in place. But there was the implication that he and Clara would take Anahson to find her father and her brothers, because she and her mother had been kidnapped from the males in their family."

So in that version, Anah really died?

"Yes, she'd been killed by another alien, the Mayor's deputy, who was trying to frame a

Peter Capaldi, director Justin Molotnikov and Joivan Wade (Rigsy) on the Trap Street set.

human for the murder and stir up the aliens of the street into taking revenge on the human world. He was trying to start a war."

To paraphrase what fellow *Doctor Who* writer Jamie Mathieson said in **DWM** 493 about different drafts, it's as if parallel-universe Trap Streets exist.

"Yeah, there's a sliding door somewhere! But instead of John Hannah, we have Maisie Williams."

In February, Sarah had her first script-feedback meeting with *Doctor Who* team members including Steven Moffat, executive producer Brian Minchin and script executive Lindsey Alford. This chat would deliver a double-whammy.

"Surreal is definitely an overused and misused word," Sarah says, "but it was still surreal for me that I was even writing for the show. I was really nervous at every meeting I went to – especially when it came to this one, where I'd hear what they thought of my first draft. But they said they liked it so much they were going to give it a more elevated position in the series. Originally I was going to be just before the Zygon two-parter or immediately after it."

Amazement crosses Sarah's face as she relives what happened next. "Steven said, 'So we're moving your episode to be the one right before the final two episodes… and we're trying to decide whether Clara should die in your episode or in the final episode. What do you think?'"

That's when a firework display of conflicted thoughts and emotions went off in Sarah Dollard's head.

"First of all, I didn't want Clara to die," she says. "I wanted her to rule a planet somewhere and be worshipped as a queen and live to a ripe old age! But also, you have this crazy writer-ego thing of, 'Well, if she's *going* to die – I want to be the one to do it!'"

Do you reckon Steven knew full well what the answer to his question would be?

"I wonder! I'm pretty sure he'd know, as a writer, that if you ask somebody, 'Would you like to be the one who kills this important character?', unless they're a mad person they're gonna say yes. So I think he was probably knew what he was doing!" ►

"I'm a terrible person! I had tears streaming down my face when I wrote Clara's death."

Ashildr (Maisie WIlliams) keeps things in order on Trap Street.

"Part of Ashildr is pickled at that teenage stage, of thinking she's in the right while being reckless."

The meeting's second whammy? Maisie Williams' return.

"When they told me they were bringing her character back," Sarah exclaims, "I said, 'Get! Out!' and practically knocked my glass across the table! I definitely thumped the table. Then I said, 'Okay, tell me more...'"

After recovering, Sarah found that absorbing the new requirements into her existing script was easier than expected.

"It all slotted together perfectly: The Mayor had her own agenda and motivations for running the street, and oddly they fitted in very neatly when you imagined the mindset of Ashildr, or Me as she likes to be called, hundreds of years after she last saw the Doctor. Unfortunately, it meant the story became less about Rigsy, but it also became more about Clara, which is wonderful."

Ashildr's similarities to Sarah's existing Mayor were remarkable, given that the writer had been unaware of Maisie's character while writing that first draft.

"I think I only had to wait a week before they were happy for me to read *The Girl Who Died* and *The Woman Who Lived*, which I thoroughly enjoyed. What a fascinating counterpoint Ashildr is to the Doctor. She really is like a Doctor who hasn't had the gift of the TARDIS or companions. Her wounds and hard edges have not been softened or ameliorated by having fascinating people in her life – she's had a lonely and isolated and cold existence."

It's interesting that Ashildr belies her grand old age by retaining certain teenage qualities, such as coming to regret making brash decisions.

"Yeah, a part of her is pickled at that teenage stage, of absolutely thinking she's in the right, while perhaps being reckless at the same time. But I think *everybody* tends to forget the times when they were wrong. It's just how we carry on. You overlook your own faults and shape your own history in your mind, telling your own story. And Ashildr doesn't have any sense of objectivity in her life, because she doesn't have any peers – people on her level, who she can talk to and who understand her. The one person who could've been that is the Doctor, and he's abandoned her, over and over again."

Sarah specialises in brilliantly in-depth flights of fancy about fictitious folk. "That kind of behaviour is definitely a fan-girl thing, but it also serves me well as a writer: it's my work! Having been in story rooms for over 10 years now, I find there are character-driven plotters and plot-driven plotters. I'm definitely the former."

When it came to killing Kenny – sorry, *Clara* – Sarah thought long and hard.

"The one thing we discussed very carefully in our meeting about the death," she says, "was that she would die instead of Rigsy, but that it should not be self-sacrifice. It should not be because she values her life less than Rigsy. She should do it because she thinks she's invincible. She doesn't think she's expendable: she's saying, 'I'm going to get through this'. Because everything that gets thrown at her and the Doctor, they get through it. They're cleverer and faster and more imaginative than anything they come up against."

Sarah describes Clara's death as, "fundamentally a horrible accident and misunderstanding. Ashildr was hugely irresponsible in making the deal with the Time Lords, but she didn't mean to kill Clara."

Clara's fate is foreshadowed by the story's opening scene, in which the Doctor and Clara bound into the TARDIS, covered in alien pollen and jazzed-up after another dice with death. Sarah nods: "And I think it's foreshadowed right through the season. Even in *Under the Lake*, she's like, 'Come on, let's go where the explosions are!' She's not doing that because she has a death wish: she's doing it because it's enormous fun, because she's high on adrenalin, because she loves running into trouble with her best friend. And she thinks she can carry on doing that forever. I really hope none of it comes across like she doesn't want to live any more, because for me it's the exact opposite. She's living too hard and not thinking about the fact that she's vulnerable. That's why those lines are so important, when she asks the Doctor why he gets to be reckless – she wants to be reckless too! I really didn't want it to be that Clara had failed at being the Doctor. She did really well at being the Doctor! It's just humans are much more breakable than Time Lords."

How hard was it to keep the episode's seismic events under wraps?

"I wanted the story to have maximum impact, so it wasn't hard to keep Clara's death a secret. The one person who I broke the secret to is my best friend, because we tell each other everything. Every so often, once a week, she would text me a skull emoji with the word 'MURDERER'! We're both big fans of Kenny, so she knew she was really hitting me where it hurts. And it did hurt! What *has* been hard to keep secret, though, is Maisie Williams! Also the casting of Letitia Wright, who plays Anahson and who I absolutely love. She completely broke my heart in [*Cucumber*'s E4 sister show] *Banana*. Of course, when you see her onscreen she's supposed to look like a boy, so I can't even tell people that Letitia's in the episode, because the moment they see her they'll know she's a girl! She's amazing as Anahson: you get so much story just from her face. Both her faces, in fact!"

One day during the recording of *Face the Raven*, Sarah was led around the set of the Trap Street she'd dreamed into existence.

"Everything looked incredibly wonderful and real and detailed. The behind-the-scenes guys brought me over to one bit of the cobblestones and said, 'Put your foot there'. So I did and they were all soft and spongy. They said, 'What do you think *that's* for?' And I was like, 'Oh no, that's *where she dies...*' Then they started teasing me for having killed her. I was so overwhelmed by the whole experience I forgot to ask to meet the raven, and I love birds. I probably put the raven in the episode partly through selfishness, so I could meet the raven myself, then I forgot to do it!"

Sarah Dollard has a corker of an earliest memory: getting her head stuck between two pylons at the end of a pier.

"I'd stuck my head through to look at the fish in the water," she remembers. "The pylons were wide at the top, then narrower as you went down, so I got stuck. I remember my father panicking as he tried to pull me out again. I was too curious for my own good!"

Born in Sydney, Sarah grew up in Melbourne, the daughter of teachers. Both her parents, she says, "had a huge love of books and stories. There was lots of reading with my mum and lots of storytelling with my dad – he's always full of anecdotes."

That could've gone the other way – you could have rebelled!

"I was completely obsessed with the TV, whereas neither of them were really interested in it. So that was my thing. No-one was allowed to talk when the television was on!"

One of the shows a young Sarah saw in the mid-to-late 1980s, funnily enough, was *Doctor Who* on the ABC channel.

"My parents vaguely have memories of me watching it, and them having to try to keep my little brother quiet for me, because he wasn't entertained by *Doctor Who*! I wasn't allowed to stay up late enough to watch new episodes, so I ended up watching repeats during daylight hours. I wasn't

FIVE THINGS ABOUT WRITING FOR TV I LEARNED FROM NEIGHBOURS BY SARAH DOLLARD

1 FIGHT FOR YOUR IDEAS... AND THEN DON'T
Be passionate and generous when pitching your story ideas. But if they don't fly, let them go. You can't be too proud. Run with the idea that works for everyone.

2 LAUGHTER IS VITAL
When you're making stuff up, you can't be afraid to look silly. Also, it's important to find humour in even the darkest stories. Real people crack jokes in bleak moments – your characters should too.

3 RESPECT THE AUDIENCE
By sheer force of numbers, the fan base's accumulated knowledge and love for the show will be greater than that of your entire team. Respect them and listen to them, but don't always give them what they want.

4 HAVE A LOT OF FEELINGS
Practice empathy in the real world and it will feed your stories. It's important to be able to find heart in even the most despicable characters.

5 KILL THE CHARACTERS THAT PEOPLE LOVE
If there's a character nobody likes, there's no point killing them. Death has currency – don't waste it! Kill the character everyone cares about.

"Whose idea was this?!"

Neighbours: Channel 5/Freemantle

And finally, a bonus lesson (less helpful on other shows):
THE ONLY WAY TO IMPROVE A KARL AND SUSAN SCENE IS TO ADD AN ANIMAL TO IT

really old enough to be an anorak about it or keep track of episode titles. I was just fascinated. My memory is that these repeats were only ever Tom Baker and Peter Davison. I watched their stories the most, and never in order."

So one week Adric would be dead, then the next he was alive again?

"Yeah! But I just loved it anyway. Adric's death possibly didn't hit me as a kid, because I wasn't watching it religiously. But watching it as an adult now, I'm struck with how it packed such a punch through simplicity."

Did you push for silent credits at the end of *Face the Raven*, over a heartbreakingly crumbled leaf?

"Haha! I didn't think to do that..."

Come the 2005 resurrection of *Doctor Who*, Sarah was, "incredibly excited. I'd gather in front of it with friends, and then go back and watch old stuff on DVD. My anorak friends helped. They said, 'Don't just start anywhere – we're going to design your re-education. We'll start with *City of Death*...'"

When Sarah approached the TV industry in Australia, she aspired to be a script editor. Her wish eventually came true during a whirlwind five-year apprenticeship on the immortal soap opera *Neighbours*.

"On that show," she explains, "you start out as a trainee storyliner and then become a storyliner, and then generally you go down the script-editing route or run the story room. Over the years I did a bit of everything. I'd been lucky that *Neighbours* ran something called a storyliner traineeship. You applied with writing samples and story pitches to earn two weeks in a story room. In those two weeks you have to prove yourself: six people around a table, coming up with every single scene in every single episode for the entire week. On Friday, the boards all get wiped and you start again on Monday."

See our box-out panel for a summary of things Sarah learnt during that process. Did she emerge from that story room hardened and ready for anything?

"Yeah, I think I did. And then felt very frustrated that there was a real snobbery about soap. I moved over here to Cardiff in August 2008 and tried to get work, but really struggled for a long time. Soap isn't given the respect it deserves, considering what it takes to make *good* soap. I don't think people understand that *Game of Thrones* is a soap opera. *Downton Abbey* is a soap opera. Being able to tell big, long-running serial stories *well* is just as much a challenge as any other kind of storytelling."

Sarah landed a job on the second series of *Merlin* as, "script editor and all sorts of other things. I ended up being kind of like an assistant to the producers. They were in London and the shoot was in Cardiff, so I was their eyes and ears on-set. I handled publicity and behind-the-scenes and organising photography. I was a general dogsbody! And I learned pretty much everything about all the different stages of production."

Jenna Coleman records Clara's final moments.

On the strength of a glowing reference from the *Merlin* team, Sarah joined *Primeval*'s fourth and fifth series as a script editor. She also started writing webisodes for the show.

"It was brilliant, getting to write. The thing about *Primeval*, too, is that so much writing had to be done so quickly. It was like *Neighbours*, really: you're in this factory that's going incredibly fast, so you just have to be good and there's no time for self-doubt. And I'd already learnt a lot about special effects and visual effects from *Merlin*. The effects were so good on *Primeval*, because the CGI artists came in so early in the process – there'd be early meetings about the big action sequences and The Mill would choreograph those, even before the rest of the story came together, really."

Having worked as both a writer and a script editor, does Sarah consciously switch between those disciplines and mindsets?

"I do. Because when you face a blank page, that can be incredibly frightening if you've got Editor Brain on! You can start judging and censoring yourself. You can over-think, which is definitely a danger for me anyway. And so the blank page becomes so terrifying that you can't start. You have to turn those faculties off a little bit, in order to bang out that wild first draft."

When it came to working on *Being Human*, Sarah switched to Writer Brain for the show's penultimate episode, 2013's *No Care, All Responsibility*.

"The thing I liked about my episode," says Sarah, "is the thing I liked about *Being Human*: real darkness and the presence of death and pathos, side by side with out-and-out humour and romance and optimism. I was absolutely devastated when *Being Human* ended and I still get sad about it. Lovely *Being Human* fans still start conversations about it on Twitter and I get sad all over again, every time!"

Sarah's association with *Being Human* creator and *Doctor Who* writer Toby Whithouse continued when she wrote an episode of Toby's BBC One spy drama *The Game*. "It was interesting to work on a show which maybe didn't have as much humour as shows I'd worked on in the past. It had its own dry, sly sense of humour, but it wasn't funny and warm like *Being Human* was, or like *Love Me*."

Sarah is referring to her own show here: the Welsh language romantic-comedy series *Cara Fi* [also known as *Love Me*] which aired on S4C last year. "I got to work with [*Being Human* script editor] Laura Cotton, who produced it brilliantly, and she's one of my best friends. We got to make a show together and make it exactly the way we wanted. Sadly, there won't be a second series, but it happened! It existed! And at least nine people saw it. Also, little-known fact: Toby did a little cameo!"

This has been Sarah's first major interview. Beforehand, she confessed to feeling nervy. Yet as you've seen, she soon took to chatting and treated us to lucid thoughts aplenty. And in the weeks to come, she'll face and conquer her own personal raven with live appearances at London's MCM Comic Con and the *Doctor Who* Festival. But as we speak here today, pre-transmission in this Trap Street pub, how does she feel about the prospect of receiving flak for offing Clara Oswald? Hopefully this won't happen, although the net did go nuts about *Torchwood*'s Ianto Jones – and the net was slightly *less* nuts back then.

"I've already had a little bit," she says. "It's been quite sweet, but a lot of people have guessed that Clara expires in my episode. Some of the descriptions in the press have made it a little bit obvious! So a couple of people have said, 'Are you going to break our hearts?' And I'm thinking, 'If I've done my job well, yes I am!' But as someone who's a big fan of a lot of things, including *Doctor Who*, I totally understand how they feel. It doesn't mean I condone, you know, sending death threats to people... but that kind of passion I completely understand. I don't think I'll be able to completely stay away from social media on the night my episode goes out, but I will surround myself with friends who I'm sure will protect me!"

Post-*Raven*, Sarah is "doing lots of development stuff" on potential new shows of her own, including a project with Toby Whithouse. "I'm still working on other people's shows too," she notes. "If I was asked to return to *Doctor Who*, I would instinctively just say yes."

Maybe Steven and co might think of you as their expert assassin, hired whenever a major character needs to bite the dust?

"Yeah, maybe!" she says, laughing. "But I really don't wanna kill anyone else any time soon, thanks! Let's let everyone live for a while..." **DWM**

The DWM review

The latest *Doctor Who* episodes and products reviewed by our team!

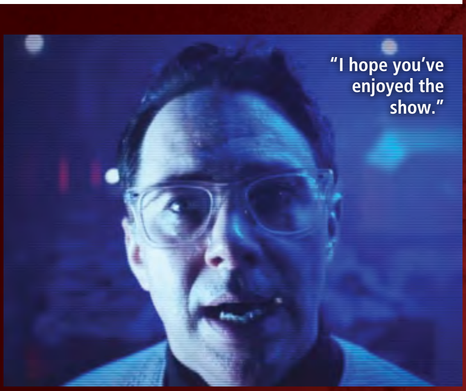
TELEVISION

BBC ONE
FIRST BROADCAST 14 November 2015

Sleep No More

"Do not watch this," implores Rassmussen. Oh, but we think that you'll be very glad you did...

REVIEW BY **GRAHAM KIBBLE-WHITE**


"I hope you've enjoyed the show."

Starting out as a proper *Doctor Who* fan in the early 1980s – as opposed to a mere viewer, which I'd been since birth – I got stuck into the required reading. That being Peter Haining's *Doctor Who: A Celebration*, published in 1983. Within, there was a reference to evil Tlotoxl from *The Aztecs*, which mentioned he 'wins the day'. This set fire to my imagination, and for years I longed to see the striped-mouth blackguard at work. I could think of no more exciting a premise for a villain than one who actually gets away with it.

In the decades to come, I trust Gagan Rassmussen – whose unconventional eyewear is a satisfactory update of the high priest's lipstick smear – will also enjoy such notoriety. That, for the few seconds and finger-strokes it'll take the new enthusiast to get *Sleep No More* streaming onto their device, the lusty prospect of a baddie victorious will fill their soul. He deserves that, at the very least. For his story (and it is) is the best instalment so far in this year's run. No small compliment.

WRITTEN BY Mark Gatiss
DIRECTED BY Justin Molotnikov

STARRING

Peter Capaldi	The Doctor
Jenna Coleman	Clara
Reece Shearsmith	Rassmussen
Elaine Tan	Nagata
Neet Mohan	Chopra
Bethany Black	474
Paul Courtenay Hyu	Deep-Ando
Paul David	King Sandman
Tom Wilton, Matthew Doman	Sandmen
Zina Badran	Morpheus Presenter

Nonetheless, strictly as a high concept, for me the thought of staging a *Doctor Who* in the form of found footage didn't hold the allure of, say, the upcoming one-hander, *Heaven Sent*. In cinema, it's a device that now feels indicative of a lack of imagination. A phrase that, when Mark Kermode is forced to reference it in the précis to one of his reviews, is done with an audible shift in buttocks. However, back in our realm, there was something else I hadn't considered. The two most important words in Mark Gatiss' pitch: 'Doctor' and 'Who'.

Brought into the *Doctor Who* milieu, found footage becomes something hugely invigorating. A new way to experience the show and also usurp its conventions. Witnessing the components of an adventure from the inside looking out is such a basic inversion, but one that pays dividends. For example, it's a novelty to meet the Doctor and Clara as strangers, rather than in our usual role as their complicit, silent companion. First we hear their conversation floating down a corridor, then we see her from the back, and finally him. They're not given their usual hero shots, no imbued stature, no definitive 'take' on what's happening. It makes it all the more enjoyable when they still rise to dominate proceedings. An affirmation that the Time Lord doesn't need such editorial advantage.

It's also a fun way to run the show out on a different set of rails, and see how it gets on. Nowadays we're used to Murray Gold's lyrical scores signalling tonal shifts and connoting varying significances (his 'A Good Man' track, for example, telling us that something extremely Doctorish is occurring) but there's little of that here. The musical soundscape is mostly subterranean, with weird noises that emerge into a near-melody toward the story's end – around the same time it's becoming apparent that this supposed reality is still as conspired as any fiction. But the Doctor isn't diminished by the starkness. Again, without the bias of the production, without even his theme tune, he can do it.

Which leads me to consider the use of sound in general. Although the visuals are where the stylistic innovation is most apparent – and obviously I'll bang on about that shortly – it's worth pointing out the audio is amazingly well judged. There are shifts in volume and cadence as we switch viewpoints, which are subtle, but add a massive amount in selling the conceit we're in that space. A swivel of the head is accompanied by a tilt in the soundscape. It's masterful work, an almost subliminal way to immerse us into the action. A BAFTA Television Craft award for this, please.

While we're giving praise to the folk who never get the convention invitations, also a word to whoever was looking after continuity. By that, I don't mean continuity in the call-back-to-*Frontios* sense. I'm talking about the task of ensuring movements and appearances remain consistent in the finished show, despite disparate set-ups. Poor continuity could have totally killed this story, with a half-resolved gesture juddering us out of its reality. But, unless you spotted something I didn't, every tiny moment joined beautifully to the next. A grand achievement, especially in consideration of what is often a mad flurry of activity on screen.

Because, yes, on occasion the 'helmet-cam' sequences were a little disorientating. For example, I didn't quite catch what was going on first time around when Rassmussen was absorbed by a Sandman. However, I felt that was as it was supposed to be. Please don't think I'm so in love with this story that I'm refusing to land any real complaints (it's possible, though). I genuinely enjoyed the chaos. The feeling of knowing something horrible had happened but not quite catching what, fed into the terror. Into the impression of *being there*.

It's not all shaky-cam. Director Justin Molotnikov has obviously worked hard to vary the pace and visual texture, cutting between POV, black-and-white fixed CCTV and Rassmussen's confessional. And interlaced within is tremendous detail. We're used to TV shows throwing up superfluous graphics and glitches in the presentation of 'footage', but this is *Doctor Who*, it doesn't end there. Not only does the early sequence of cod-code resolve into an acrostic of the show's title (a most satisfactory way of getting that in), but it turns out that in the end, those tiny spates of onscreen interference, which seemed to be there just for verisimilitude are the most important detail of all. Rassmussen's signal coming out of the noise.

It's so, so ingenious. And an indication of something else too. That character's utter brilliance. Rassmussen wins! Granted, a large part of that is in the framing. It's his story, and all the way along he makes it plain he's fashioning everything we're seeing, so it does have something of that brand of autobiography in which the author gives us situation after situation in which they have the last laugh. But in case that hasn't weighted things enough in the mad scientist's favour, he also adds an additional layer of editorialising with his commentary.

"You must not watch this!" he commands as it begins, the greatest inducement he could possibly offer to make us do just the opposite. But this direct address is not only arresting, it's playful. "I've put things together into some kind of order so you can understand," he continues. "So that you can have some kind of idea. There are bits missing. Sorry about that." In both script – which creates a febrile tension between the past-tense commentary and the as-it-happens material – and Reece Shearsmith's brilliant, roving portrayal, Rassmussen spars with the viewer. "Ah, this is where I come in," he says in voiceover when his hideout in the Morpheus pod is discovered.

‘Rassmussen’s story is the best instalment so far in this year’s run… It’s so, *so* ingenious.’

Better yet, Rassmussen knows *how* we’re watching the story, our minds always jumping to the meta-narrative; those plot and production conventions that also shape an adventure. “Oh, I’m not dead,” he offers, pretty much at the exact moment smart aleck dads at home are loudly cogitating *how can he be narrating this if…?* “You’ve probably guessed that by now.” The masterstroke, however, is when the camera adopts Clara’s point of view after she’s been inside one of the pods. My initial reaction, while I still believed in the helmet-cams, was that the show had let us down, and it was now flouting its own rules. Did that bring me out of the story? Perhaps it did, a bit, which was a little unfortunate. But the satisfaction in later discovering the joke was on me, and that there was an ingenious narrative reason for the new angle, outweighed any interference I’d experienced in my enjoyment. Go back, watch it all again (which you should if you haven’t) and you notice that we were never spun a lie on this matter. “Everything you’re about to see is from their individual viewpoints or taken from the station itself,” says our host. The word ‘camera’ is never mentioned.

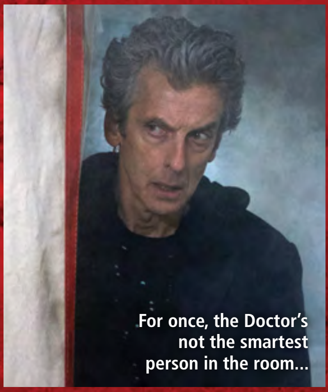
We’ve long since been schooled that the Doctor is always the smartest person in the room, but I don’t think that’s the case here. Or, maybe – as before – that’s not the way it is in Rassmussen’s edit. When he says, of the Time Lord, “Anyway, you’ll see, he had a theory,” it’s a lovely way to undermine him. It made me think how many *Doctor Who* stories invest absolute faith in the leading man’s deductions. Almost all of the time, when he’s given to postulate, that then becomes the definitive interpretation of the plot (to wit: *The Silurians outwitted you even after you’d massacred them, so now you’re a prisoner on the ship you hijacked!*). I was so wrong-footed by the final revelation here of how the Sandman contagion was really transmitted, it took me a good few minutes to process the magnitude of that. The Doctor’s hokum turned out to be just that.

It’s a mammoth twist. That’s because, if we strip down *Sleep No More* to its essentials, it’s basically that. A tale of the unexpected. The found footage element is wonderful, but it’s more an aesthetic component – albeit an extremely useful one. Not only does it mess about with the mores of a *Doctor Who*, it also acts as a distraction from the adventure’s true shape. Appearing like a means to an end all of its own, the form allows Gatiss to conceal what he’s truly up to. Here was the real plan: to place the Doctor and Clara into some other show, an anthology series, in which Reece Shearsmith, of TV’s *Inside No.9*, is the star. This was all done without their knowledge, of course. Upon arrival, they went with the flow and, despite a few irregularities (“It’s like this is all for effect… like a story”), it seemed as if it was job done by the end. You know, the usual: contagious spores of monsters originated from hot-housed eye-gunk being burned up by Neptune’s atmosphere.

Even now, they’re none the wiser.

Meanwhile, bouncing across the solar system, Rassmussen’s final testimony: “I do hope you enjoyed the show. I did try to make it exciting. All those scary bits, all those death-defying scrapes. Monsters, and a proper climax with a really big one at the end.” The final words, there, of the man who outwitted the Doctor and served us up a fantastic value-for-money yarn at the same time. So do as he suggests when he faces his own oblivion. Let’s give him and his Sandmen a life beyond the single 45-minute slot. Tell all your friends and family. This one deserves it – let’s send it viral. **DWM**

Sleep No More – a story seen partly from Clara’s point of view.



For once, the Doctor’s not the smartest person in the room…

TELEVISION **BBC ONE**
FIRST BROADCAST 21 November

Face the Raven

The Doctor and Clara are led into a trap that has deadly consequences for the two friends...

REVIEW BY **GRAHAM KIBBLE-WHITE**

Clara bravely faces the raven...

The portents were there. Throughout this series, the Doctor had wondered what would become of Clara Oswald. Again and again he'd turned over in his mind how his life might be after her death. Our own reality had also flagged it up. We can't ignore that. On 18 September, Jenna Coleman had gone on to BBC Radio 1 to confirm: "I have left the TARDIS. It's happened."

Yes, the portents were there... but not in this episode, surely? Which has none of the foreshadowing that's normally considered appropriate. No loaded talk of a 'storm coming' or any suchlike.

Instead Sarah Dollard's *Face the Raven* seems to have the shape of an enjoyably rackety tale. The kind of thing that's there to bang around the screen entertainingly, and then leave us as it found us. Feeding into that impression is the vague taste that there's something of the 1980s, early 1990s, in its brand of quirkiness and magic. Gaudy phrases like, 'Quantum Shade', 'Lamp Worm' and 'Chronolock'. Murray Gold going all *Mawdryn Undead* on the musical score, with his waggling electric guitar. And, most of all, the visual allegory that this odd little bestiary of illegal aliens are, in Home Office terms, 'illegal aliens'. It's something that could have been drawn from one of the proto-political stories produced during Andrew Cartmel's time on *Doctor Who*. "Name, species and case for asylum!" snaps the quixotically-named Mr Kabel. "You do know this is a refugee camp?" adds Mr Rump.

WRITTEN BY Sarah Dollard
DIRECTED BY Justin Molotnikov

STARRING

Peter Capaldi	The Doctor
Jenna Coleman	Clara
Joivan Wade	Rigsy
Maisie Williams	Ashildr
Simon Manyonda	Kabel
Simon Paisley Day	Rump
Robin Soans	Chronolock Guy
Angela Clerkin	Alien Woman
Caroline Boulton	Habbrian Woman
Jenny Lee	Elderly Woman
Letitia Wright	Anahson

There's a graphic-novel scope to that idea too, in the glimpses we get of crazy monsters (Kabel and Rump; a wolf man and a fish man), and when the raven takes flight, it's easy to imagine it progressing in panels over a spread of pages.

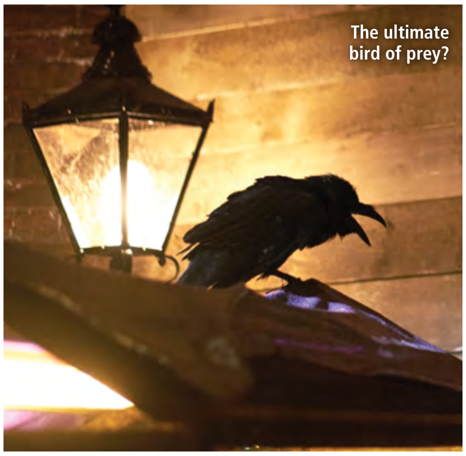
But a more specific influence seems to be Neil Gaiman and Lenny Henry's 1996 BBC Two fantasy *Neverwhere* (featuring a brown-eyed Peter Capaldi as the Angel of Islington), which presented us with another Regency-esque view of a hidden London, peopled by oddballs and the dispossessed.

Add to all this the return of Rigsy and Ashildr, and a section of the story that revolves around the fact the Janus child Anahson is secretly an Anah, and that would seem plenty to be going on with. An adventure apportioned with more than enough to keep it busy, and modelled to play out as a *Doctor Who*dunnit, with our heroes working to release the street artist from his spurious murder charge. Except that's not how it goes. As it winds to its terminus, *Face the Raven* reveals a trap street all of its own. It's here that Clara is to die.

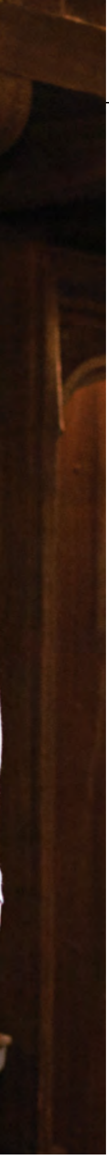
Even the practical steps taken towards this conclusion fail to prepare us. Clara's scheme to take on Rigsy's sentence does seem exactly as she says: "clever". It's ostensibly the hatching of a classic plot-switch, a way in which to hoist the villain by their own petard. Plus, Jenna Coleman, who communicates such concern in Clara's micro-expressions when she overhears the young father on the phone to his baby and partner, persuasively sells it and you can understand why she would step into the fold. It's also plausible that Rigsy would have confidence in her strategy. "So this is your life, just bouncing around time saving people?" he asks. In her ambition to be as reckless and brave as the Doctor, she's managed to replicate something of his charisma. As she believes in the Time Lord, Rigsy now has faith in her. Of course it's all going to work out.

> **'It's the saddest story the programme has ever brought us, coming just when Clara seems to be at her brightest.'**

Ashildr – the Mayor of Trap Street.


The ultimate bird of prey?

Rewind back to the opening moments of the episode, and we're presented with another take on this year's recurrent gag of the Doctor and Clara thundering back into the TARDIS from yet another bonkers to-be-Big-Finished adventure. "I totally saved you from having to marry that giant sentient plant-thing!" she says. The duo's shared enthusiasm for their exploits together has been nicely judged this series. They're having the time of their lives, but they demonstrate that only in the most passing of terms. There's nothing cloying here (*cf* Rose to the Tenth Doctor: "Oh, I love this. Can I just say, travelling with you, I love it" – *boke*!). Equally dexterous is the way the show has also signalled that, in her hunger for such thrills, Clara's revealed she's actually an intensely damaged person. The section where she's whooping in delight at being



very nearly flung out of the police box while it hovers high over London is really disturbing. “She enjoyed that *way* too much,” observes Rigsy.

Is Clara unstable? Has she secretly been looking to lose her life? You could make an argument for that, particularly as, when she realises she is to be put to death, she admits, “Maybe this is what I’ve wanted.”

The convention in the rough and tumble world of *Doctor Who* is that all the crying has to be done by the time the end theme kicks in. That makes sense. It’s not practical for the show to carry remorse onwards, week after week. This is an adventure serial, not a treatise on loss, and even the Ponds had to KBO after their infant daughter was stolen from them a few series back. Sorrow was good for one episode, but then it was time to face the future. That seemed to be the case with Clara also, following Danny Pink’s death. But the brilliance about her story has been this gradual revelation that his loss has been eroding her soul, and that in observing the customs of both *Doctor Who* and the Doctor’s life, she’s exacerbated that process. All the running, the jumping, the risk-taking have been assumed in lieu of grief. She’s never had a chance to heal. Now her moment has come, her thoughts leap immediately to him: “If Danny Pink can do it so can I… Die right.”

It’s the saddest story the programme’s ever brought us, coming to its conclusion just when Clara seems to be at her brightest (on Jane Austen: “She is the worst, but I love her – take that as you like”), and more devout than ever in her belief in the Doctor. “We can fix this, can’t we?” she asks. “We always fix it.”

The last few minutes are stunning, both Jenna Coleman and Peter Capaldi bringing us the most affecting kind of tragedy: a stoic one. Quite rightly, this Doctor doesn’t shed a tear, but there’s a world – a universe, a whole reality – of pain behind his reddened eyes. He kisses her hand goodbye, a strange and formal farewell from a man who is both of those things. There’s also a bitter irony in the way she pleads, “Why can’t I be like you?” and then, moments on as she accepts her fate, he asks her, “What about me?” It’s as if their roles have switched and the Doctor’s now delivering the companion’s questions.

Clara’s actual departure is unusual. While both Amy Pond and Rose Tyler were disappeared from the series, rather than killed off, their loss was depicted as someone fading from view, with all the romantic intonations and feelings of longing that come with that. A beautiful final flourish. But the Coal Hill School teacher, who is rightly given the opportunity to first be brave, dies a bodily death. There’s a scream – thankfully mixed out of the soundtrack – and then a cold body. A corpse, with buckled legs. There’s nothing wistful or fantastical about that.

I have been a little disingenuous, though. I’m guessing that, like me, you probably *did* have an inkling beforehand that Clara was going to leave us tonight. Peter Capaldi blowing the gaff on *The Graham Norton Show* the evening before was maybe something of a pointer. And furthermore, you were also aware that this isn’t quite the end for her. Last month’s **DWM** cover hinted at that, at the very least. But I hope you were still as shocked as I was by how it went down. This has been a real jolt, one which has yanked the series onto a whole new track for its final two episodes.

“I was lost a long time ago,” says the Doctor as melancholy as we’ve ever seen him. And then he’s taken – who knows where? **DWM**

TELEVISION

BBC ONE
FIRST BROADCAST 28 November 2015

Heaven Sent

Alone and afraid, the Doctor heads into the unknown for an adventure like none before…

REVIEW BY **GRAHAM KIBBLE-WHITE**

Flip open the disc and inside you find an impeccably engineered machine, fascinating in its intricacies. Even more so when it’s set in motion. Gears interlocking and sections shifting to both hide and reveal pathways. *Tick*. This is the place the Doctor has been transported to. *Tock*. This is the script written by Steven Moffat. *Tick*. This is the performance given by Peter Capaldi. *Tock*. This is all of those things.

Heaven Sent is immaculate, harmonious *Doctor Who*. It’s a marvel, it’s a top 10 best-ever story, it’s… I really liked it. Inspect it in detail, with your jeweller’s eyepiece in, and the workings are incredibly beautiful. It is a circular story housed inside a circular structure with actions running clockwise, whether that’s the title character counting out the minutes from one side of the castle to the other, or pacing around and around the TARDIS console.

WRITTEN BY Steven Moffat
DIRECTED BY Rachel Talalay

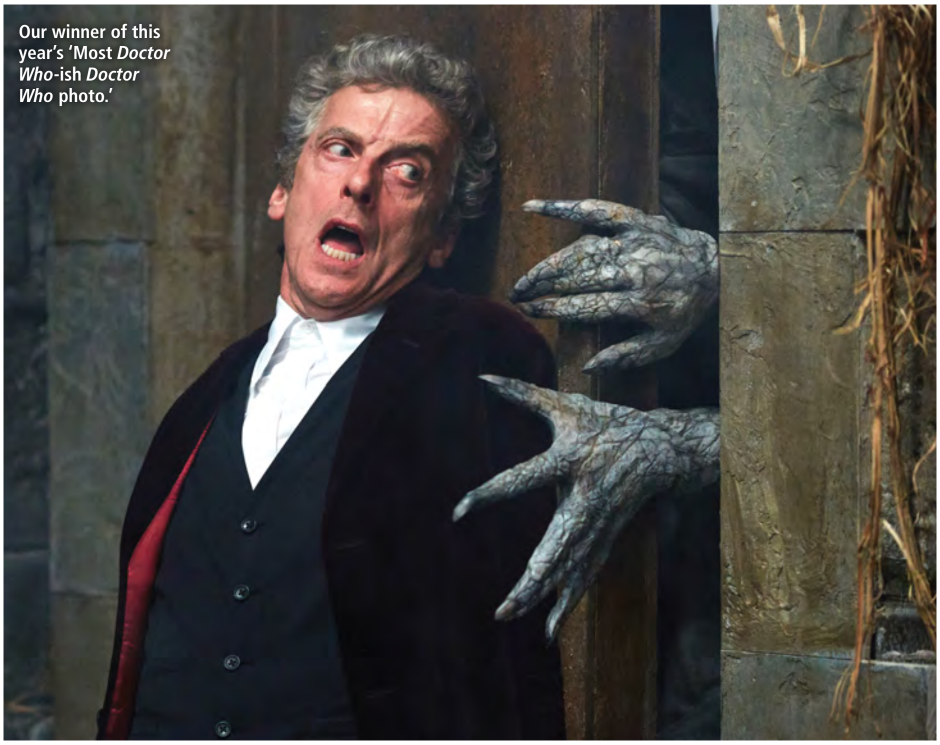
STARRING

Peter Capaldi	The Doctor
Jenna Coleman	Clara
Jami Reid-Quarrell	Veil

Being a one-hander, it’s also self-evidently unlike anything the series has ever brought us before – and yet it’s absolutely indicative of it, presenting a definitive portrait of the man who calls himself the Doctor. While it’s a given that we should never truly be privy to the Time Lord’s private thoughts, Moffat’s script nonetheless brings us some fresh insight. “I always imagine I’m back in my TARDIS, showing off,” says the traveller as he introduces his own version of Sherlock’s ‘mind palace’. This visualisation of those inner-workings is one we can easily apply to any other point in the drama’s history whenever he has been placed in peril. There it goes, the mighty brain instantly processing a billion calculations (“The faster you think, the slower it will pass… assume you’re going to survive”), filtering for a solution based upon a search algorithm that also identifies which would be the wittiest.

That is how he’s always ticked along, but we’re only made aware of it now, because it’s only now the Doctor has been required to externalise it. “I’m nothing without an audience,” he admits inside his imaginary TARDIS, giving a sly look down the lens to us at home (with an extra special twinkle for those who connected this with remarks made by Moffat in his **DWM** column last month).

Ever since *The Runaway Bride*, it’s been asserted our hero *needs* a companion, but I never truly believed that. At last I see it. Although the Doctor doesn’t require validation, *Heaven Sent* reveals that like any entertainer, he hungers for a reaction. The way he backtracks to flag up his cleverness in dropping a petal to covertly test for atmospheric pressure, and the eyepiece (for gravity) and how he ►



Our winner of this year’s ‘Most *Doctor Who*-ish *Doctor Who* photo.’

◄ flung that chair out of the window (for altitude) – he does that simply to impress us.

Such an inclination is why, when he first arrives in his prison, he's full of the usual bombast; shouting and making big proclamations. He's still the Doctor people want to see. But as his internment continues, that aspect erodes and we witness a quieter, more reactive, personality. Granted, a lot of that is due to the horrendous conditions he's having to endure, but I'd also assert it's about the fact he doesn't have anyone left to play to. When he persuades a door to open, early in his stay, that instinct is to the fore. "See Clara, still got it." However, he displays a fragment of discomfort at her name. She's gone. What is he even doing?

It's a convincing thesis on the Time Lord, which illuminates him a little, but leaves plenty of shade. Better yet, it's not about the manufactured mythos of its subject, unlike some of the storylines in recent times where universes have been held in sway over the question of 'Doctor who?' This is instead a measurement of the kind of man he is. Moffat's script may reference the Brothers Grimm's *Household Tales* but we should look to Ancient Greece, rather than Eastern Europe, for the real insight. Because within these 55 minutes, the Doctor is portrayed as Sisyphus, caught within a loop – that *totally amazing* sequence – where he's losing his life over and over, purely to chip tiny slivers out of a 20ft-thick wall which is 400 times harder than diamond. Around he goes. For 7,000 years, then 12,000 years, 600,000, two million, 52 million, nearly a billion… two billion years. Crunch the numbers: infinitesimally miniscule gains over unimaginably huge timescales. Within the contrariness of those stats is charted out something of the scope of his character.

Accompanying this never-ending task, Moffat looks at how the Doctor's compulsion for things to be set right has also become an impossible labour. "I can't keep doing this, Clara. I can't. Why's it always me?" he asks, when it's flagged up – by his own subconscious – that he must continue to win (underlined three times). "Can't I just sleep?" he implores, as he sinks deep into the murk of the ocean. But no, never. It's an obsession that will not let him rest. That burden is best encapsulated when we stand back and realise that, when the traveller first stepped from the teleportation booth and made his vow to "never stop", he did so while running his own ashes through his fingers – unaware that he himself had pushed the lever which brought him there.

On the subject of burdens, one wonders how tested Peter Capaldi felt when he was first made aware of this episode. If he did have concerns, I'd guess most of them faded upon reading the script, because it's so rich narratively. Although you could perhaps loftily term this story a meditation, it's always in motion. And often very funny: "What sort of person has a power complex about flowers? It's dictatorship for inadequates." Capaldi's performance reflects that as he stalks and talks, sometimes charming as our guide, sometimes attacking the space around him. The really important thing, though, is that he communicates such diverse facets of his Doctor – from his humour to his loneliness – without it ever feeling as if he's laying out some kind of master class. Which, let's be clear, he totally is, but it's pitched *just so*. Dazzling without showing off.

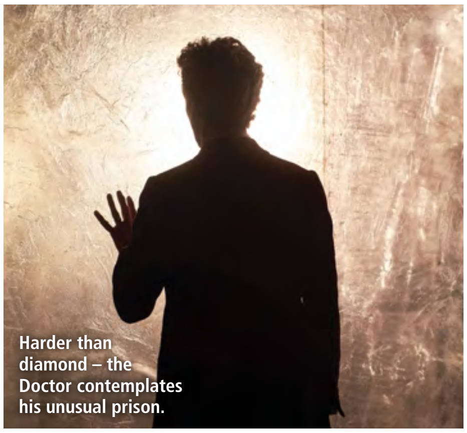
Showing off *per se* isn't a bad thing in *Doctor Who*. The very notion of a one-handed episode is audacious. And this programme has always been at its greatest when those steering it possess the chutzpah to make a huge move. Bigger on the inside. Recast the title role. Bring in the Time Lords. Now let's also drop in a former childhood friend as a villain. Say Davros invented the Daleks. Hint the Doctor was one of Gallifrey's founding fathers. Kill them all in a Time War. Bring 'em all back. Those are a few of the tectonic shifts that have moulded the current landscape… Or, you could just say they're some of the times in its 52-year history when the show received a massive kick up the arse (particularly now Clara has brought that word into our sphere, another paradigm change, I guess). The point is, *Doctor Who* does not welcome careful drivers, and this year's run has been blessed with a special kind of recklessness that's made it seem as if it could take us anywhere. That it will not observe the normal rules. "I didn't leave Gallifrey because I was bored," admits the Doctor as the confession dial's mechanisms work upon him. "That was a lie. It was always a lie." Those kind of portentous statements can often feel empty, like a tantrum that quickly passes. But in this current climate? It's electric, crackling with possibilities, and I think, right now, Moffat would – as the glib often say – actually 'go there'.

He leaves the Doctor outside the city: his home. His eyes blazing as they did when we first caught sight of him in *The Day of the Doctor*, where he joined with his other selves to save the civilization. However, this man, who is wired so that he can never stop, now seems to be contemplating something truly terrible.

Teeth within the machine connect. Wheels turn. The Doctor advances. *Tick. Tock. Tick. Tock…* DWM

The sinister Veil stalks the Doctor…

'This year's series has been blessed with a special kind of recklessness that's made it seem as if it could take us anywhere.'


Harder than diamond – the Doctor contemplates his unusual prison.

The Doctor endures an eternity of torture.

TELEVISION

BBC ONE
FIRST BROADCAST 5 December 2015

Hell Bent

Returning at last to his home planet Gallifrey, the Doctor sets out to unleash hell on the Time Lords...

REVIEW AND AFTER IMAGE BY **GRAHAM KIBBLE-WHITE**

The Time Lords worry when their prodigal son returns...

“Since the Cloister Wars. Since the night he stole the moon and the President’s wife. Since he was a little girl. One of those was a lie, can you guess which one?”

Well, Missy, now we know.

Plot resolution is tough. The fact of the matter is, it’s far easier to ask interesting questions than it is to answer them captivatingly. But in *Hell Bent*, the full-stop to this year’s run, Steven Moffat lays all of our current concerns to rest, and in great style – even when it comes to the sonic screwdriver. It’s not that the story is especially stuffed with revelatory moments, even though we’ve come to expect them at this time of the *Doctor Who* year (*He’s really the Master!* Or: *She’s really the Master!*). It’s that, while there are surprises, the true pyrotechnics come from character revelations, rather than plot.

In many cases, these were fuses that had been lit quite some time ago. The longest of all is the return to Gallifrey. In 2013, the Doctor vowed he’d take “the long way around” in getting back, a phrase he resurrects in this story to allude to his prison sentence in *Heaven Sent*, before it’s then gifted to Clara as she leaves the show. As if the fact she was now heading off in her own TARDIS, throwing switches and levers with élan, wasn’t confirmation enough of her well-earned Doctorate.

But in taking this route, we see the Doctor has reverted to something of his earlier self, the ‘Doctor of war’ incarnation. The shooting script to *Hell Bent* confirms it, which describes that shot of Peter Capaldi walking across the dry lands with jacket slung over his shoulder in reference to John Hurt’s arrival in *The Day of the Doctor*. On a similar tack – albeit one not actually taken in the finished episode – when he discards his velveteen attire, he is then directed to dress in peasant’s clothes, ‘as close to *Shane* as we dare’.

Once more, the Doctor has set aside his accoutrements to become a figure of vengeance. A man on the outside, who doesn’t head for his actual home, but for his spiritual one; the barn in the middle of nowhere. It’s a formidable portrait. All the more frightening because during these early scenes on Gallifrey he barely utters a line. “Words are his weapons,” says Rassilon, which is true. But even those, he’s thrown away. As if all he needs is that powerful impulse for retribution. Faced with a Sky Tank, he marks out a line in the sand with his heel, and then turns his back. Murray Gold’s score strikes up ‘The Doctor’s Theme’ (perhaps more popularly known as ‘Flavia’s Theme’ thanks to Russell T Davies’ messing around on a Ninth Doctor DVD commentary), performed now in the style of an Ennio Morricone track.

The Doctor prepares to use his words of weaponry.

It’s affecting, not just because of the ‘lonesome stranger’ myths that are being invoked, but the way it dares to tread across the badlands of *Doctor Who*. That tune, for example, wending its way back into the show. For us old-timers (sat in our rocking chairs on the porch, hocking loogies into a diamond logo mug) it’s like a song from way back when. There’s such a frisson when different bits of *Doctor Who* connect. More pertinently, I believe there’s also a long-held fear by fans that no good ever comes of having Gallifrey in the show. The truism seems to be that its very presence ‘normalises’ the Doctor, making him one of many, rather than a lone original. So it’s smart that Moffat and his team have gone to great pains to depict him standing apart.

WRITTEN BY Steven Moffat
DIRECTED BY Rachel Talalay

STARRING

Peter Capaldi	The Doctor
Jenna Coleman	Clara
Maisie Williams	Ashildr
Donald Sumpter	The President
Ken Bones	The General
Clare Higgins	Ohila
Malachi Kirby	Gastron
T’Nia Miller	Female General

There’s also the theory that this is a place better realised in description than actualisation. Those of us now called indoors to wash up our *Doctor Who* crockery remain haunted by the drab versions brought to us in the 1980s. Again, I feel this anxiety is counteracted. Director Rachel Talalay sends her camera shuttling through an exquisitely dense CGI-rendered version of the capital before a final *boom* as it bounces through the glass dome into the Citadel of the Time Lords. It’s a wonderfully impactful moment, which seems designed to communicate: *Don’t worry, we can do this now*.

My impression is that Moffat has brought us here simply as a treat. Ever since it was named, Gallifrey has been *Doctor Who*’s hottest ticket, even if it never quite matched up to the reviews. “I can’t miss Gallifrey!” gasped Sarah Jane Smith back in 1976. With cloister bells ringing out across the city, wraiths circulating below, it’s finally the place it always should have been, but with the Doctor’s visit ending up in a massive family row (as per), I doubt we’ll be back there again soon. It was good to see it, now let’s move on... Although, I am campaigning for more from the reliably epic Donald Sumpter, whose voice sizzles with the aeons, as Rassilon.

But the Doctor. That’s who we were talking about. I’ve usually prickled at attempts to build his mythos within the show’s own fiction. However, in this case, Moffat has earned that right through years of meticulous groundwork. This renegade is referred to as, “The man who won the Time War,” something of a folk legend among his people. It’s

►

When can we see the spin-off? Clara and Ashildr head off to new adventures...

'Clara's line that "tomorrow's promised to no-one... but I insist upon my past," is one of the most beautiful Moffat has written.'

interesting, then, that when he's raised so high, he too looks despotic. "Get off my planet," he tells Rassilon, one alpha male usurping the next. "Tell the High Council they're on the next shuttle," he says, dismantling the regime.

It takes someone like Ohila to step inside that, and remind him of his 'never cruel or cowardly' vow. Because the Doctor doesn't really have what it takes to become a monster. Grabbing the Commander's gun inside the Extraction Chamber, he doesn't appear threatening. He just seems desperate. And that, truly, is the keynote to all of his actions. A desperation to save his Clara. A desperation for everything to be okay, which we can all relate to. "Pulse, yeah? You have a pulse, yes? *Pulse*?!" he yells, impotently willing it to be so. What was the plan anyway? For the pair of them to live out their lives in hiding, knocking around the far-end of time?

If there is something potentially contentious about this wonderful story, I'm guessing it's going to be Clara, and that her return shows up *Face the Raven* as yet another feign in a long series of such about whether or not the girl once known as 'impossible' has truly died. I've already excused Osgood's return earlier this series. I find this one to be equally as permissible. Not just because her demise is subverted in ingenious style and that the Doctor ultimately has to pay the price for it, but because it gives us what those other potential/fake (delete as per your whim) exits didn't: Thematic resolution. It's entirely satisfactory that she leaves our programme under her own aegis. Her line that "tomorrow's promised to no-one... but I insist upon my past" is one of the most beautiful Moffat's ever written. It also shows her taking control of their relationship. Unlike most other *Doctor Who* companions, she is the lead in her own story, and it's she who brings this chapter to an end. Whatever she said to the Doctor back in the Cloisters, I hope we'll never know. Although, if it lives on in song, perhaps it's that musical motif which has accompanied her all these years. The one the Doctor plays in the diner in the opening scene.

Last year's *Doctor Who* series finale spoke of death, this one brings us life. In a peculiar way, the unveiling of an old TARDIS interior is absolutely part of that. Because this is pure celebration, an enjoyment of the brilliance of this show, and how much it has to offer. Another note from Moffat's script has it exactly: 'The Doctor is flying around the classic console like a distinguished Scottish actor who's slightly too excited for his own good.' But more significantly, it precipitates a new life for Clara, even if it's one that will dog Jenna Coleman's heels for the rest of her natural. Fans will never stop asking when we'll be getting to see that spin-off show with Maisie Williams. And a new life for the Doctor too, of course. In this year when the programme has felt particularly reinvigorated, it nonetheless does it all again.

Nothing's sad until it's over. Back in the TARDIS, the lights come on. The Doctor climbs into a Doctory coat. The new sonic springs from the console.

Snap! The doors close and off we go – the resolution of one mighty story, overlapping with the start of the next. DWM

AFTER IMAGE

Last year I used this spot to admit that I hadn't enjoyed *Doctor Who* as much as normal. This year, I'll make it very clear – I've absolutely *loved* the last 12 weeks of adventures. What a series!

The overriding triumph of the run is, that throughout it's displayed a fresh dynamism. This sense of a reboot is not just good fortune, it's been specifically manufactured. Steven Moffat recently stated that in planning this run there was an impetus to "do lots of two-parters, because we're out of the habit, and that will be difficult. And by making it difficult, it has that 'Series One' rawness to it... It's anything you can do that doesn't make it feel like business as usual."

Challenging *Doctor Who*, bending it, seems to lend it that tensile strength and the potential it may still twist into other new shapes. Alongside those two-parters, we've had 'unofficial' two-parters, an overtly political thriller, a found-footage episode, that one-hander. And bigger ideas than ever, like giving the Doctor the chance to kill Davros when he was a child, or the broader concepts of Vikings vs aliens, or ghosts from the future... in an underwater base. Plus, how about new information relating to the reason our hero originally went on the run?

The Hybrid has been this year's unifying thread, and the most successful for some time. It's a concept that didn't require the contrivance of additional scenes welded onto extant stories, and in its final unveiling, stood up to its promise. Is it up for debate, perhaps, what it ultimately pertained to? Ashildr prodding the Doctor about the possibility of him being "half-human, half-Time Lord" was delightfully naughty, but the explanation I bought into was that it referred to the Doctor and Clara. Their union proving to be destructive. The myths whispered on Gallifrey had said the Hybrid would destroy "a billion, billion hearts to heal its own." Which is what so nearly happened.

Nonetheless, a few million hearts have taken a battering over the last few Saturdays. It's now that she's gone we can start truly appreciating what Clara Oswald – and Jenna Coleman – brought to *Doctor Who*. Trying to conceive of it without her seems wrong. There's a gap. Something that fitted just so. It's a word horribly overused, particularly by the BBC press office, but the Doctor and Clara has become an *iconic* visual. She was a character who, against dramatic convention, began with convolutions that were gradually straightened out over her years, to leave her on a linear, unimpeded course to becoming her own hero. Coleman's already secured her next big TV gig, and that's no surprise. She's surely bound for a career that will prove as stratospheric as Clara's next adventures.

As for the Doctor, I believe this year has really been Peter Capaldi's. In 2014, he brought us the Twelfth incarnation, with all his particular hang-ups and (un)pleasantries. But in 2015, at last, we had the Doctor again. Just the Doctor in all his glory. Same old, same old – but *never* business as usual. DWM

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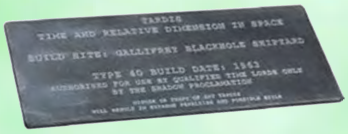
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Doom Coalition 1

After the, frankly, astonishing *Dark Eyes* finally reached its conclusion, I was almost sure that the Eighth Doctor stories destined to follow in its wake would fall short of the mark set by the tales of Molly O'Sullivan. 'Almost' being the operative word in that particular mental equation. You see, as much as I thought it wouldn't, and couldn't, happen, part of me hoped against hope that somehow the folks at Big Finish would reach down deep and pull another rabbit out of the Eighth Doctor's hat. Well, it seems that if you hope for something hard enough, sometimes, just sometimes, it works. Fate and the other forces that determine such things, get together and conspire to make it happen. The other forces, of course, being the writers, cast and crew responsible for bringing *'Doom Coalition'* to life. They've done it again, and with the first arc of the new Eighth Doctor multi-part adventure, they've created something spectacular.

WRITTEN BY John Dorney, Matt Fitton, Marc Platt, Edward Collier

STARRING

Paul McGann	The Doctor
Nicola Walker	Liv Chenka
Hattie Morahan	Helen Sinclair
Robert Bathurst	Padrac
Caroline Langrishe	Lady Farina

Opening with the Seventh Doctor bringing a rogue Time Lord known only as the Eleven into custody, *Doom Coalition* starts at a frantic pace and barely pauses for breath. From that point onwards, it's a full throttle, totally immersive experience. The audience is thrust headlong into the Eighth Doctor and Liv Chenka's pursuit of this new villain, as he escapes from custody in the first story in the box set, *The Eleven*, and nearly brings Gallifrey to its knees while doing so.

Hot on the trail of the Eleven, our heroes then find themselves back in 60s London. There, in *The Red Lady*, and in the dusty corridors of museum academia they acquire a new member of the TARDIS crew, Helen Sinclair. It is here where art really comes to life and they find themselves at odds with an ancient and malignant entity. Then, having discovered a mysterious request from Galileo in the museums artefacts, the Doctor, Liv and Helen travel to seventeenth-century Italy to ascertain the meaning of the astronomer's message. However, having arrived at the beginning of the age of scientific enlightenment, it soon becomes apparent that the message from the Doctor's old friend was actually a warning.

Having failed to heed that warning, in *Galileo's Trap*, our plucky adventurers are confronted by bellicose intergalactic bounty hunters and cybernetic law enforcement in an encounter that hurtles them headlong into the Eleven's path. Which brings us to the concluding part of the box set, and delivers them into the heart of *The Satanic Mill* and the clutches of their adversary. And in a frantic life-or-death struggle, in which the fate of the Doctor and Earth hang perilously in the balance, and in grand fashion, the solar curtain falls on the first act of *Doom Coalition*.

The Eighth Doctor's latest outing is proper edge-of-your-seat, tension-filled drama that doesn't ease, or let up, for a single second of its entire duration. The quality control setting, as far as both writing and performances are concerned, is at absolute maximum and never less than thoroughly engaging and entertaining. The masterstroke of genius though, the spark around which everything revolves, is the Eleven, the unpredictable foe, who thanks to the regenerative crisis that created him, is as much victim as villain. Mark Bonnar's stunning portrayal of the multiple personalities that make up this tragic, brilliant yet twisted character, adds another iconic, and hopefully long lasting, nemesis to the Doctor's ever increasing list of enemies.

After *Dark Eyes* I hoped for a miracle. And that's exactly what I got. Incredible. **TIM CUNDLE**

> 'The Eighth Doctor's latest outing is proper edge-of-your-seat, nail-biting drama...'

AUDIO DRAMA

BIG FINISH
RRP £20.00 (CD), £20.00 (download)

UNIT: Extinction

Doctor Who on TV and on audio used to be like ships passing in the night. They'd occasionally sort of meet, and wave at each other from a distance, but there was always a slight gap. A crack between dimensions, if you will. But now, the cracks are closing, and the twain has well and truly met. Only a matter of days after *The Zygon Inversion* aired, Big Finish launched *UNIT: Extinction* – the first in a series of box sets starring Kate Lethbridge-Stewart and Osgood, defending the Earth. *UNIT: Extinction* pits them, and a new supporting cast of characters, against a hostile takeover by the Nestene Consciousness.

Unlike a lot of Big Finish's box sets, which tend to contain four discrete stories adding up to a larger whole, *UNIT: Extinction* is a serial in the mould of epic, high-profile BBC thrillers like *Edge of Darkness* and *State of Play*. It works on a global scale, but also stays reverent to *Doctor Who*, hitting the ground running as soon as the impressively 'widescreen' new theme kicks in.

It opens with UNIT tracking a UFO cross-country in true 1971 style – whilst Kate attends a product launch by billionaire Simon Devlin (Steve John Shepherd), who's unveiling a new kind of 3D printer, one that could actually change the world. Shepherd, best known as the unhinged Michael Moon in *EastEnders*, is inspired casting, coming over as a debonair, dangerous modern Tobias Vaughn, turning on a hair between charming and vicious.

Needless to say, this modern spin on the plastics factory hides a sinister agenda, the new method of Nestene takeover is novelly grisly, and the Autons are a pleasingly sinister presence on audio. Their original 70s sound design is restored here to great effect. Monsters that you can hear coming aren't normally that effective, but this just makes them creepier. An old catchphrase also makes a glorious comeback.

WRITTEN BY Andrew Smith and Matt Fitton

STARRING

Jemma Redgrave	Kate Stewart
Ingrid Oliver	Osgood
Warren Brown	Lt Sam Bishop
Ramon Tikaram	Colonel Shindi
James Joyce	Captain Josh Carter
Steve John Shepherd	Simon Devlin
Karina Fernandez	Jenna Gold
John Dorney	Glarr

One of the main things you notice about this version of UNIT is that they're very much more capable. They don't hit the panic button and call the Doctor in at the drop of a hat. He's mentioned, but not really needed, as they're coping very well on their own here. Sure, the world's in terrible danger, but you get the feeling that they've got this one. There's also a spanner in the works thrown in by nosey reporter Jacqui McGee, played by Tracy Wiles, who looks set to be a problem in the future, issuing an ominous warning at the end that sounds like it's building to something.

Of course, there are numerous, occasionally fatal hitches along the way. There's also a nicely fractious frisson between the leads. Kate is clearly in charge and trying to modernise UNIT, but is often caught between Ramon Tikaram's no-nonsense Colonel Shindi, and James Joyce's brash young Captain Josh Carter – the latter of which is something of a loose cannon. Kate benefits from a bit of space away from playing second fiddle to the Doctor, and Jemma Redgrave runs with it, making Kate confident, professional, and fearless in the face of impending armageddon – even getting in a pleasing quip about the effects of memory-wiping. Most importantly, despite the frequent mentions of her late, great father, she's not living in his shadow.

Meanwhile, Osgood seems greener and less certain – a sweet, shy geek thrown into the field. Ingrid Oliver is delightful, playing her as super-intelligent but frequently flustered, especially when Carter gently flirts with her. The team is rounded out by Warren Brown as tough, pragmatic field agent Sam Bishop – and by the end, this UNIT family feels fully formed.

Big Finish's first major foray into post-2005 *Doctor Who* is cracking stuff. The scripts by Matt Fitton and Andrew Smith are smart and pacey, and director Ken Bentley gives it all a glossy, expensive feel. Finally, UNIT has the spin-off it deserves. **MARTIN RUDDOCK**

AUDIO DRAMA

BIG FINISH
RRP £14.99 (CD), £12.99 (download)

Planet of the Rani

It's curiously reassuring and comforting when an established antagonist reappears to lock horns with the Doctor. This time, the Doctor ends up becoming entangled in the affairs of the Rani again. Having been summoned to a parole hearing for her, the Doctor and Constance discover that everything isn't quite as it should be at the prison. In the aftermath of the Rani's ensuing gaol-break, the Sixth Doctor is shocked to learn that it's his 'fault' that she managed to escape. Having managed to throw a spanner in the works of her liberation, the Doctor follows her to her 'world' Miasimia Goria in an attempt to bring her to justice and rescue his companion. Upon arriving, he discovers a world devastated by the Rani's legacy of genetic experimentation, now governed by her 'offspring', and is involuntarily drawn into the battle for the planets future. Caught between the devil and the deep blue sea – the Rani and her successor – the Doctor is forced into an impossible position. One which he's not only 'responsible' for creating, but one only he can ultimately solve.

Planet of the Rani is a thoughtful, intelligent drama that not only adds further layers to the complex relationship that exists between the hero and his polar opposite, it also further expands on their mutual history. Marc Platt's story also questions the wisdom of biological research used as a tool for forced evolution, while at the same time criticises the British foreign policy that left India in turmoil, desperately trying to fend for itself. As with all of Platt's stories, it's fantastically well-written and imagined, and the performances and characterisation are superb and ramp up the razor sharp tension that exists between the Doctor and the Rani in exquisite fashion. Built around multiple plot threads that constantly weave in and out of each other, *Planet of the Rani* is a masterclass in *Doctor Who* storytelling that teases, tantalises and leaves you desperate for more. As every great tale should. **TIM CUNDLE**

WRITTEN BY Marc Platt

STARRING

Colin Baker	The Doctor
Miranda Raison	Constance Clarke
Siobhan Redmond	The Rani
James Joyce	Raj Kahnu/Guard
Olivia Poulet	Pazmi
Dominic Thorburn	Brejesh
Tim Bentinck	Chowdras

BBC
DOCTOR WHO
BRAND NEW ADVENTURES
COLIN BAKER AND MIRANDA RAISON in
PLANET OF THE RANI
BY MARC PLATT
THE AUDIO ADVENTURES OF DOCTOR WHO
BIG FINISH
FEATURING SIOBHAN REDMOND AS THE RANI
FULL CAST AUDIO DRAMA

AUDIO DRAMA

BIG FINISH
RRP £14.99 (CD), £10.99 (download)

The Forsaken

This year's run of *Early Adventures* continues with another story for the Second Doctor, Polly, Ben, and Jamie.

The TARDIS lands on an isolated island off Singapore in the middle of the Japanese invasion of 1942. The three friends soon find themselves in a ramshackle hotel with a small group of British soldiers and ex-pat civilians, waiting for a boat to evacuate them. But, something else is on the island, something picking them off one by one. Ben is particularly concerned, as one of the young soldiers – Private James Jackson – is his father.

Justin Richards' atmospheric script has an overall undercurrent of unease, as the cabin fevered soldiers and civilians are taken by stealth, becoming more and more scared in the process. It's like a sort of 1967 version of *The Time of Angels* with a side order of *Fang Rock* – with the stiff upper-lipped fear of the soldiers and residents conveyed well by the cast and some very effective sound design. It's very much Ben's story, but never feels overbalanced towards him.

Elliott Chapman continues to shine as Ben – played absolutely straight and very much in the spirit of Michael Craze. Anneke Wills gives us her best brave-scared Polly as well as narrating, while Frazer Hines really nails the Second Doctor's more cunning and calculating side. This Doctor might fumble around with the contents of his pockets and prevaricate about lunch, but he also seems to quite relish the macabre nature of the mystery, and enjoys taunting the villain and being in charge. It's a great performance, a triumph for Hines, who really captures Patrick Troughton's nuances here. Needless to say, he's also spot on as Jamie, and gets to throw in a brief but effective bit of 'evil' acting.

Of the guest cast, Gabrielle Glaister does a fine job as a world-weary landlady, and Oliver Jackson is calm and understated as Ben's Father, James. Best of all is Ben Nealon, as a silky-voiced, ever-slightly-too-calm Captain.

All in all, *The Forsaken* is a little gem. It not only offers a creepy spin on the Troughton era by combining historical and base-under-siege, but gives Ben Jackson a story of his own. **MARTIN RUDDOCK**

WRITTEN BY Justin Richards

STARRING

Anneke Wills	Polly Wright/Narrator
Frazer Hines	Jamie/The Doctor
Elliot Chapman	Ben Jackson
Ben Nealon	Captain Freeman
Michael Jibson	Corporal Gibbs
Dan Starkey	Kayste/Skegg/Stodd
Oliver Jackson	James Jackson
Gabrielle Glaister	Maggie Bishop

BBC
DOCTOR WHO
BRAND NEW ADVENTURES
ANNEKE WILLS AND FRAZER HINES in
THE FORSAKEN
BY JUSTIN RICHARDS
THE AUDIO ADVENTURES OF DOCTOR WHO
BIG FINISH
FEATURING ELLIOT CHAPMAN
THE EARLY ADVENTURES

AUDIO DRAMA

BIG FINISH
RRP £35.00 (CD), £30.00 (download)

Jago & Litefoot Series 10

Jago and Litefoot have now racked up 10 series of audio adventures. As such, there's an understated air of celebration to this latest run, which tips a titfer to the characters' legacy without letting it get in the way of the action.

The first story in this box set is Simon Barnard and Paul Morris' *The Case of the Missing Gasogene,* a typically demented slice of dashed funny business concerning a mad scientist's attempt to cut evolutionary corners with a 'potentiation potion'. The results are, naturally, monstrous. The story introduces Toby Hadoke as Carruthers Summerton. Hadoke's funny, fussy performance perfectly suits the series' house style.

Jonathan Morris' pitch for *The Year of the Bat* is 'Mary Poppins with vampires', in which 'nefarious nannies' are to be found flying above the chimney pots of London. The story's main sell, though, is the introduction of the Yesterday Box, a magical maguffin (the gift of a mysterious Doctor) that delivers messages 30 years into the past. This allows us to drop in on younger versions of Jago and Litefoot.

The Mourning After opens with the arresting spectacle of Jago's funeral, but James Goss doesn't sustain that feint for long: the story soon shakes out as a tale of 'crawling horrors and paganism and chaos'. With Jago temporarily indisposed, Litefoot gets a new partner in the form of Dr Luke Betterman, played by David Warner.

The threads are drawn together in *The Museum of Curiosities*, in which the investigation into a series of murders leads Jago and Litefoot to the dramatic finale, set in an exhibition dedicated to their own adventures (think the *Doctor Who* Experience with added deathtraps), where space has been reserved for two star exhibits

Featuring everything from killer automatons to clues found in monogrammed handkerchiefs, it's a fitting inventory of everything that makes this series such a joy. With its emphasis on witty wordplay and clever character comedy, *Jago & Litefoot* promises no more jeopardy or heartache or real-world consequences than an episode of *Scooby-Doo*. It's a frothy confection but, as a certain contemporary of our esteemed heroes once wrote, what larks. *What larks!* **PAUL KIRKLEY**

WRITTEN BY Simon Barnard, Paul Morris, Jonathan Morris, James Goss, Justin Richards

STARRING

Christopher Benjamin	Jago
Trevor Baxter	Litefoot
Lisa Bowerman	Ellie Higson
Conrad Asquith	Inspector Quick
Toby Hadoke	Carruthers Summerton

BIG FINISH
CHRISTOPHER BENJAMIN & TREVOR BAXTER
FROM THE WORLDS OF DOCTOR WHO
JAGO & LITEFOOT
INVESTIGATORS OF INFERNAL INCIDENTS
SERIES TEN

AUDIO READING

BBC AUDIO
RRP £9.25 (CD)

The House of Winter

WRITTEN BY George Mann
FEATURING The Twelfth Doctor and Clara
READ BY David Schofield

BBC
DOCTOR WHO
THE HOUSE OF WINTER
AN ORIGINAL AUDIO ADVENTURE
WRITTEN BY GEORGE MANN

The House of Winter is a classic slice of Gothic *Who*, serving up a rich mix of mad scientists, bloodsucking vampire moths and a scary hybrid creature that Clara stumbles across in a darkened laboratory. Its narrative and philosophical themes bear a certain similarity to 1989's *Ghost Light* – praise does not come higher than that.

Proper novelist that he is, George Mann writes with a literary flourish ('the TARDIS folded out of the vortex with its customary elephantine roar'), but also knows when to sit back and let the action drive the story. A pleasingly old-school story it is too – there's nothing here to really expand either the mind or the *Doctor Who* universe (and, for a haunted house mystery, it could be a shade more spooky) but there's a pleasingly unforced elegance to the piece: the pseudoscience is satisfying, the final-reel twist is effective (if not entirely unexpected), and everything is tied off with the sort of neat bow this show is often so sorely lacking.

David Schofield – recently seen on screen in *The Girl Who Died* – proves a good choice of reader. His Twelfth Doctor is perhaps a little enthusiastically Scottish (I kept expecting him to cry, "We're all *doomed!*"), but he knows how to tell a story, and gives very good monster.

Speaking of which, Target novel fans will be thrilled by Mann's vivid descriptions of the beast within – because who doesn't love a twitching proboscis? Oh, and the creature also has a chitinous shell that Schofield deftly avoids being tripped up by. Which, in case you thought I'd forgotten, is why I was writin' about it. **PAUL KIRKLEY**

TALKING BOOK

BBC AUDIO
RRP £20

The Two Doctors

BBC
DOCTOR WHO
THE TWO DOCTORS
ROBERT HOLMES
READ BY COLIN BAKER

WRITTEN BY Robert Holmes
FEATURING The Sixth Doctor and Peri; plus the Second Doctor and Jamie
READ BY Colin Baker

Delivered with robust energy by Colin Baker, the first 60 seconds of *The Two Doctors* provides a description of space station J7 that gives pause for thought. As it spins on its axis, the station "resembled a cheap knuckle duster that had been used by Godzilla." This potentially over-written description either points to a discomfort on Holmes' part with prose writing, or he was sat at his typewriter, pipe clamped between his teeth, cackling away to himself. It's certainly bold, and sets the tempo.

In many ways, the often-colourful writing makes *The Two Doctors* well-suited to the audiobook form. There's a lot bubbling away in the pot, with the Sontarans luring the Second Doctor into a trap to acquire the secrets of time-travel through an alliance with genetically modified Androgum, Chessene. There's an epic intent to the plot that doesn't quite pay off, even with the international locale of Seville. The Sixth and Second Doctors barely share any narrative time together, which is a shame, although Holmes does present an interesting take on his own Sontaran creations. The most pleasing sequence is the culinary ramble through Seville in the company of the Second Doctor and the food-obsessed Shockeye – a great character in the grand tradition of the Holmesian grotesque. The story might not entirely hang together, but it's undeniably entertaining.

Colin Baker has great fun on reading duties, delivering the rich prose with aplomb. His fondness for *The Two Doctors* shines through, giving voice to a wide-range of characters with ease. His Second Doctor is lovely, nicely catching the warm, impish tones of Patrick Troughton, and giving both Peri and Jamie the required international resonance. Chessene is as silky smooth as Jacqueline Pearce made her on TV, while Baker's Shockeye is both sinister and funny. It's yet further evidence of Baker's oratory skills, and it's to be hoped there will be further bookings for him on this range in the future.

There's the usual polished production from BBC Audio. Simon Power provides both sound design and music, the score giving a sense of muted terror that suits the often gruesome nature of the action. From the echoing corridors and metallic clangs of space station J7, to a Spanish countryside chirping with cicadas, the soundscape matches the words and reading for depth.

The Two Doctors is an entertaining listen across five hours. While far from Holmes' best work, it's broad and bawdy, scary and silly. It might start with a bonkers piece of descriptive prose, but finishes with a deft final sentence that neatly sums up *Doctor Who*... **MARK WRIGHT**

> 'Colin Baker has great fun on reading duties, delivering the rich prose with aplomb.'

AUDIO DRAMA

BIG FINISH
RRP £9.99 (CD), £7.99 (download)

Torchwood: The Conspiracy

WRITTEN BY David Llewellyn

STARRING
John Barrowman ..... Jack Harkness
John Sessions .... George Wilson

Jack Harkness is a hard man to kill. Like its irrepressible leading man, it seems *Torchwood* has no intention of lying down and dying either. Four years after *Miracle Day* seemingly finished the franchise off for good, *Torchwood* has found a new home at Big Finish, with Captain Jack taking centre stage in the first of the range, to be followed by Gareth David-Lloyd, Eve Myles and even original boss lady Tracy-Ann Oberman.

As its title suggests, *The Conspiracy* finds fertile ground in the arena of online paranoia, as personified by George Wilson, a journalist-turned-new-age-prophet who claims the world is actually controlled by alien lizards as part of a plot to plunder the Moon (yes, really) of its natural resources. He's David Icke without the turquoise shellsuit or goalkeeping skills, basically.

The problem is, Wilson's ravings about 'the Committee' – the secret global cabal that runs everything from governments to the military-industrial machine – happen to be right on the money, which piques the interest of our man in the RAF greatcoat.

Charmingly, Jack's first act is to deploy all the underground contacts and hi-tech espionage skills at Torchwood's disposal to acquire... a press pass, so he can attend Wilson's gig at the Cardiff Arena. This undercover work once again raises the sticky issue of exactly how far below the radar Torchwood is supposed to be.

There is some good sport to be had with the conspiracy nut stuff – including a neat gag about Paul McCartney's infamous non-death in the late 60s. But the plot – one of the strongest *Torchwood* has had – also rubs up against some very real contemporary concerns: what Wilson describes as 'a heady cocktail of terrorism, economic collapse, overpopulation, food shortages and global pandemics'.

Part audiobook, part drama, *The Conspiracy* makes good use of its small, uniformly excellent cast, with John Sessions bringing just the right mix of gravitas and world-weary pathos to the role of George. As for John Barrowman, it was hard not to raise an eyebrow at the prospect of the ebullient song and dance man fronting Russell T Davies' adult sci-fi thriller, but he made the role his own through sheer force of his megawatt personality. He radiates infectious enthusiasm and easy charm in a performance phoned in (physically, but never spiritually) from Palm Springs.

The Conspiracy is a robust start to a new series that strongly suggests that, like Paul McCartney – and, indeed, Captain Jack Harkness – reports of *Torchwood*'s death really have been exaggerated. **PAUL KIRKLEY**

FULL-CAST AUDIO DRAMA
JOHN BARROWMAN
TORCHWOOD
THE CONSPIRACY
BY DAVID LLEWELLYN

AUDIO READING

BIG FINISH
RRP £2.99 (download)

The Way of the Empty Hand

WRITTEN BY Julian Richards
FEATURING The Second Doctor, Jamie and Zoe
READ BY Frazer Hines

DOCTOR WHO
SHORT TRIPS
FRAZER HINES performs
THE WAY OF THE EMPTY HAND
by JULIAN RICHARDS
BIG FINISH

The Second Doctor stands apart from his other selves when it comes to violence. He has no problem leading others into danger, and he's not quite a conscientious objector either. Maybe he just got used to Ben, Jamie, or Lethbridge-Stewart handling the rough stuff. Even Zoe's no slouch. In short, he just doesn't seem to need to get his hands dirty.

The Way of the Empty Hand is set toward the end of the Second Doctor's era, and throws him into an 'arena' story set on the war world of Combatia, where he must fight various opponents to the death for the amusement of the bloated villain Corpulus. There are distinct echoes of *The War Games*, plus nods to *The Iron Legion* and even the 'Jabba' scenes from *Return of the Jedi* here.

The only time it looks like it could actually come to fisticuffs is when the Doctor puts his hands up and gets ready to perform half-remembered Venusian Aikido, but his opponent yields before he gets the chance. In a way, it's a shame that this Doctor doesn't get to cut loose for a change. However, his cunning in essentially charming his enemies out of a fight is him all over – and expertly teased out by Frazer Hines, whose multiple roles here make this less of a straight reading and more akin to a *Companion Chronicles* adventure.

Julian Richards' story is a short-but-sweet parable about how fighting isn't always the answer. Considering how much death and darkness is around the corner for the Doctor, it's fitting that he remains a man alone, choosing words over fists. **MARTIN RUDDOCK**

SHORT STORIES

BBC BOOKS
RRP £6.99

Heroes and Monsters

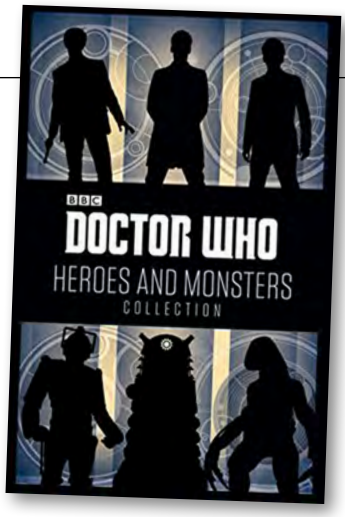
WRITTEN BY Gary Russell, Stephen Cole, Jacqueline Rayner, Justin Richards and Moray Laing

"I like short stories," says the Doctor, in the fittingly titled *Once Upon a Time*. Originally published in the 2009 *Doctor Who Annual*, and reproduced in this new anthology, it chronicles an encounter with an alien parasite that survives by feeding on ideas. "He hasn't got writer's block," explains the Doctor, as the creature's luckless host slumps at his keyboard. "He's got too many ideas to choose from."

If you want a surfeit of ideas, the *Heroes and Monsters Collection* captures the spirit of *Doctor Who*'s dizzying diversity with stories set everywhere and when from a Victorian music hall to the Warp Hotel on Askenflatt Minor (famous for its everlasting summers and the best cuppa in the known universe). That said, it doesn't *entirely* reflect the programme's famously flexible format, the dark shadows that regularly engulf our hero being mostly absent, as you might expect from material largely culled from a decade's worth of stocking-filler Annuals and BBC Children's Books' kiddie-friendly *Doctor Who Files*. This is *Doctor Who* as fun and frothy intergalactic adventure, in which a Slitheen plan to open a deadly funfair is foiled by vinegar from the chip van, an alien invasion is repelled by throwing sticky buns at them and an evil octopus literally slips on a banana skin. They're scenes that wouldn't disgrace the CBeebies Panto – and there's absolutely nothing wrong with that, especially when the writers prove so adept at capturing the modern show's sparky, quickfire wit.

There is the occasional change of pace: Justin Richards' *Most Beautiful Music* is a rather lovely fairytale about friendship, while the same author's *Blind Terror* is a surprisingly touching story about the bond between a blind girl and a Sontaran. Yes, really. Others, meanwhile, dig further into televised adventures: *Birth of a Legend* details the creation of Dalek black ops squad the Cult of Skaro, while *The Final Darkness* retells *The Christmas Invasion* from the point of view of the Sycorax. It's a wonderful way to approach the idea of an expanded *Doctor Who* universe.

Most of the material dates from the David Tennant and Matt Smith eras, but Gary Russell has contributed three new stories. *The Stranger* features John Hurt's Doctor on Gallifrey in the early years of the Time War, while *Normality* sketches in details of Clara's appointment at Coal Hill School. One of just two appearances by the Twelfth Doctor, *Buyer's Remorse* – about a bidding war for the TARDIS on what is effectively Planet eBay – provides a fittingly light and inconsequential ending for a collection that has consistently favoured giddiness over gloom.



In that sense, the cover and artwork for the book – sober, restrained, *tasteful* – are a bit misleading. The primary-coloured pictures that accompanied many of these tales on their original publication would do a better job of selling what this actually is – a children's storybook. And a delightful one at that: any young fans who find this in their stocking this year will think all their Christmas Annuals have come at once. **PAUL KIRKLEY**

BOOK

ECW PRESS
RRP £15.13

The Doctors Are In

WRITTEN BY Graeme Burk and Robert Smith

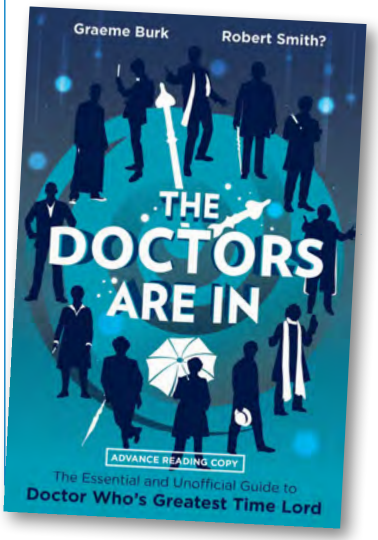
Who is the Doctor? It's a question that fans, writers, friends and foes have been asking since he first appeared on television more than half a century ago. It's not, as anyone who has ever watched *Doctor Who* will more than happily tell you, an easy question to answer. Nevertheless, it's one that Burk and Smith attempt to shed some light on in their latest tome, *The Doctors Are In*. While they don't find any definitive answers to the impossible question, they do (through extensive research and their undisputed love, and in-depth knowledge of the subject matter) add a little light to the eternal darkness that shrouds the Doctor's true identity.

Adhering to a strict, and strangely engaging, template, the authors examine what each actor who played the Doctor brought to the role. They discuss the impact each Doctor had – on the show, on the character, on them as fans through the television stories; and the companions that they think best typify each Doctor.

As the book runs – in terms of Doctors – chronologically, it gradually builds a picture of the ever-changing face and evolving nature of the Doctor, and firmly enshrines his position as the greatest Time Lord. However, because it relies so heavily on the creators' opinions, there are times when you'll find yourself vehemently disagreeing with their choice of stories, or how they view each of the Doctor's incarnations.

But, even though you'll occasionally sit there shaking your head and muttering 'no', the passion, energy and enthusiasm with which they argue, and put forward, their case is completely infectious and you can't help but be swept up, and along, by it.

Feeling more like a fireside chat between two old friends, one that you're invited to, over a pint or two of beer down your local than a by the numbers guide, *The Doctors Are In* is an entertaining and interesting exploration of the age-old question. It's easy to dip in and out of, but at the same time is so compelling that you won't want to put it down until you've finished the final page, But most of all it's fun, witty and thoroughly charming. Just like the Doctor. **TIM CUNDLE**


Graeme Burk
Robert Smith?
THE DOCTORS ARE IN
ADVANCE READING COPY
The Essential and Unofficial Guide to
Doctor Who's Greatest Time Lord

STOCKING FILLERS

CHARACTER OPTIONS | **AVAILABLE FROM** TOYS R US
5.5″ figures **RRP** From £14.99 | 3.75″ figures **RRP** From £6.99

Action Figures

For the last couple of years, we've been marking the apparent slow death of the 5.5″ *Doctor Who* action figures, with only a few re-releases and variants to keep us traditionalists going. But it's not the end, and the moment has been prepared for, as Character has pushed out some real treats in its figure ranges this year.

In the final scenes of 2013's *The Day of the Doctor*, Matt Smith's Eleventh Doctor came face to face with one of his predecessors. He was referred to as 'the Curator', but we knew the truth. More than any other Doctor, Tom Baker embodied the spirit of the role long after he hung up his scarf and it just feels right to have him join the other Doctors in 5″ form. Eager fans can now recreate that old VHS compilation classic, *The Tom Baker Years*, as our elder statesman strolls past a toy Davros and boasts "Beat you, cock!"

The senior Tom is packaged alongside an impressive depiction of the painting known as 'Gallifrey Falls' (*aka* 'No More'), with a framed lenticular image used to capture the 3D-ness of the original. The set also comes with a card inlay that can be removed from its box to make an attractive diorama of the Curator's room.

While we're checking off our Doctors, we can also breathe a sigh of relief that the current incarnation is now finally available in the 5.5″ scale, as four variants. He's depicted in his smart first series costume of a dark-blue suit (no hoodies here) with white, black, maroon and polka-dot shirt variants. The likeness is subtle, but the multiple articulation points help to capture this Doctor's angular physicality rather nicely – all elbows and a scowl. The Twelfth Doctor is joined – at last – by Clara, albeit as a variant of the previously released 'Oswin'. You might also find a revised Flight Control TARDIS with spooky new sound effects and a few other cosmetic tweaks.

The most exciting releases of all came very late in this year, as Character Options took to YouTube to announce a new strategy to prolong the 5″ scale with online exclusives, aimed more at the collectors market. First out to bat were two variants of the Queen of Mean herself, Missy. Available in Black or Purple outfits, Missy's heads can be swapped to select either a neutral expression or a more malevolent grin – they provide a superbly sinister capture of Michelle Gomez's wonderfully expressive face.

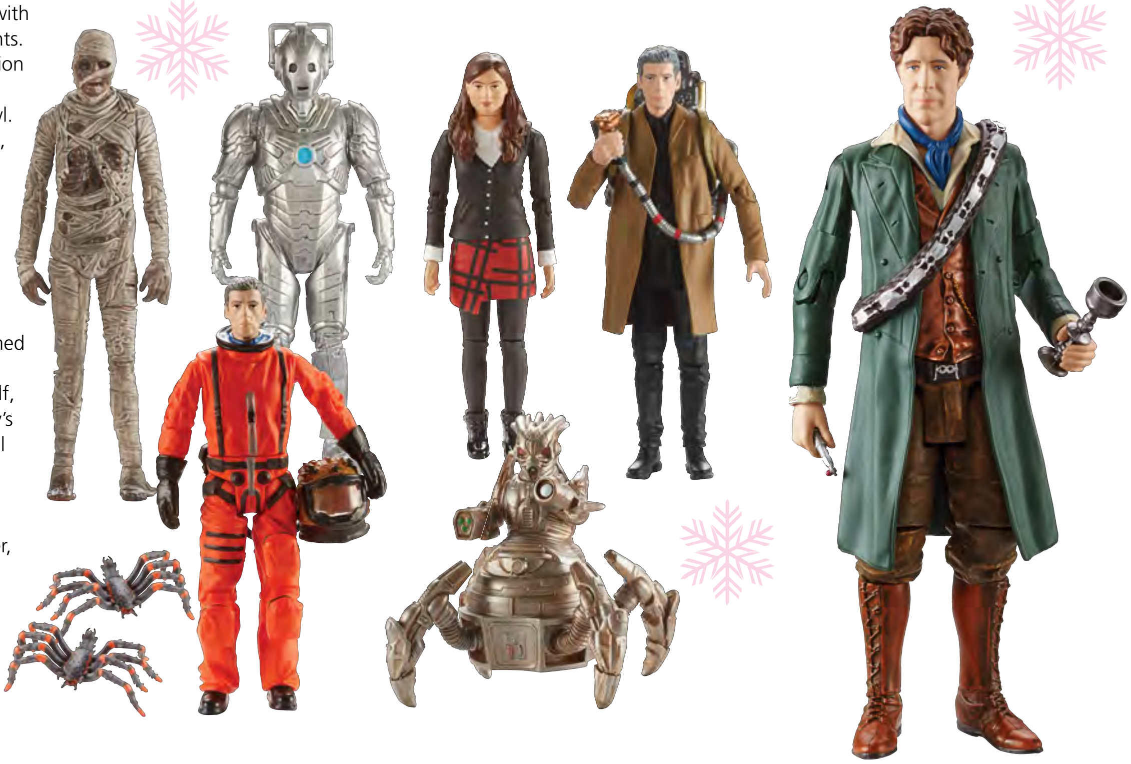
In late November came a genuine fan-pleaser, a figure of the Eighth Doctor from the 2013 mini-episode *The Night of the Doctor*. This 'last appearance' action figure comes with a removable bandolier (a reminder of that companion-who-never-was, Cass) and the Sisterhood's goblet, which was instrumental in the Doctor's regeneration. Long-term readers might recall my bias for toys that allow the owner to use their imagination and fill in the gaps, and with audio producers Big Finish now reaching the Eighth Doctor's role in the Time War, it's a joy to see such a timely figure. I look forward to seeing him in many fan-made online comics and YouTube videos to come.

Meanwhile, this year the smaller-scale 3.75″ figure range has included a pair of Daleks from the Third Doctor's era: the gold leader from *Day of the Daleks* (1972) and the movie-style Supreme from *Planet of the Daleks* (1973). Skaro's finest can always be relied upon to impress and they work well in the smaller scale. A new innovation is the 'electronic moving Dalek'. Released in four variants taken from the last decade, the Daleks appear to glide across table-tops at a menacingly slow speed – though they are a little noisy, so probably not intended for stealth.

Bringing things up to date, the small range now includes the Twelfth Doctor in his outfit from 2014's *The Caretaker* (along with the detection gadget) and in his spacesuit from 2014's *Kill the Moon* (along with some lunar-dwelling space germs). The luckless Danny Pink has been immortalised in Cyberman toy form, along with a revised Clara and two brand new monsters: the Skovox Blitzer (from *The Caretaker*) and the Foretold from 2014's *Mummy on the Orient Express*, a creature which has to be the most unpleasant *Doctor Who* monster ever. Perfect for ghoulish children of all ages. **JIM SANGSTER**

Some of Character's new 5″ figures.

> **'With Big Finish's audio dramas now reaching the Eighth Doctor's role in the Time War, it's a joy to see this figure…'**



WARNER BROS/TT GAMES
RRP £74.99-£79.99 (Core game) | **RRP** £29.99 (Level pack) AVAILABLE FOR: PS3, PS4, Xbox 360, Xbox One, Wii U

Lego Dimensions & Doctor Who Level Pack

7-14
LEVEL PACK
71204
LEGO
DIMENSIONS
ALL NEW GAME LEVEL!
An Adventure in Space and Time
DOCTOR WHO

There have been many attempts to make a *Doctor Who* video game, but capturing that certain *something* about the series has proved elusive... until now. *Lego Dimensions* may not quite offer a fully-fledged *Doctor Who* game, but the Doctor plays a major part in its mechanics.

The core *Lego Dimensions* riffs on the toys-to-life genre, with Lego mini-figures placed on a portal that drops them into the game. *Lego Dimensions* brings together some of the world's biggest entertainment brands – from *Batman* and *Scooby Doo*, to *Back to the Future* and *Jurassic World* – in one delicious digital brick confection.

The game's story concerns evil Lord Vortech, whose quest to possess the Foundational Elements has inadvertently pulled the sidekicks of some pretty powerful heroes through dimensional portals. Batman, Gandalf and *The Lego Movie*'s Wildstyle embark on a quest through 14 Lego universes to retrieve their friends.

Where does the Doctor fit into all this? Bouncing through worlds based on *The Wizard of Oz* and *The Simpsons*, amongst others, the trio are rescued from the vortex by a mad man with a blue box. Yes, it's the Doctor, voiced by a delightfully twinkly Peter Capaldi, who sets the heroes down in their very own *Doctor Who* adventure, with Daleks, Cybermen and Weeping Angels, all of which are just as terrifying in Lego form.

PS4
LEGO
DIMENSIONS
STARTER PACK
7-14
71171

The iconography of the series is beautifully realised, accompanied by authentic Murray Gold music. The gameplay is simple but effective – puzzle-solving, building, using the abilities of the characters to perform specific tasks – and final battles with some Big Bads, including the Dalek Emperor.

While you can't initially play as the Doctor in the core game, that's where the *Doctor Who Level Pack* comes in. Available separately, the pack comes with insanely cute mini-figs of the Doctor, K9 and the TARDIS, ready to place on the game portal and zap into a full-on, immersive *Doctor Who* Lego game. It all kicks off with a pre-credits teaser for *The Dalek Extermination of Earth* that will have you howling with laughter.

The gameplay gets the beats of *Doctor Who* spot on, with the TARDIS essential to moving through time zones to complete puzzles. The attention to detail is astonishing. From the voice talent – including Peter Capaldi, Jenna Coleman, Michelle Gomez, John Barrowman and Nicholas Briggs – to the little flourishes (a Li H'sen Chang poster adorns a wall in Victorian London), this is glorious stuff. Even better, completing the *Level Pack* story levels unlocks every incarnation of the Doctor, allowing you to run around as your favourite and explore their individual Lego TARDISes – including monochrome variants for Hartnell and Troughton.

The initial spend for the core game plus *Doctor Who Level Pack* is admittedly on the steep side, but what's on offer is immensely enjoyable and accessible for all the family. Continued gameplay is rewarded beyond the initial story levels, with the Doctor able to jump back into the core game as a playable character. There's something quite delicious in seeing the Doctor driving the Batmobile or tripping along the Yellow Brick Road, and there are several other *Doctor Who* Easter Eggs to look out for.

Whether you're a seasoned gamer or a *Doctor Who* fan who might enjoy seeing their heroes rendered in Lego bricks, *Lego Dimensions* with the *Doctor Who Level Pack* is a must-have. Created with deep love for the source material, it's fun, cheeky, insidiously playable and easily the best *Doctor Who* video game. **MARK WRIGHT**

BBC WORLDWIDE
RRP £29.99 (DVD), £34.99 (Blu-ray)

The 10 Christmas Specials

Bar a fourth-wall shattering "Happy Christmas" from the First Doctor in 1965, and a Chrimbo-tinged episode of *K9 & Company* in 1981, Christmas barely registered in the world of *Doctor Who* before 2005. It's all so different now. *Doctor Who* is just as embedded in the Christmas telly schedules as *The Morecambe and Wise Show* once was.

So, 10 years of *Doctor Who* and 10 Christmas Specials. What's interesting looking at these as a whole, now bundled together for the first time, is how strikingly different Russell T Davies' and Steven Moffat's ideas of Christmas are. From *The Christmas Invasion* through *The Runaway Bride* to *Voyage of the Damned*, Russell's Christmas ideal seems festooned with tinsel, pop music and gluttonous bonhomie. Steven Moffat's concept of Chrimbo, meanwhile, is insular and wintery – more Charles Dickens than Noddy Holder.

The Christmas Invasion (2005) is Russell's *Doctor Who* distilled – bright, funny and breezy, but with the added burden of introducing a freshly-regenerated Doctor. It's a roaringly enjoyable romp, but *The Runaway Bride* (2006) beats it for beefy laughs, as Catherine Tate's Donna Noble makes her first gobby appearance.

As a pastiche of the kind of the disaster movies that Hollywood excelled at, *Voyage of the Damned* (2007) is largely successful, but Kylie Minogue's marquee-name casting proves a bit of a misfire. Better is David Morrissey as the haunted Jackson Lake in *The Next Doctor* (2008), and there's still a fanboy thrill to be had by seeing the old Doctor flashbacks.

There's less festive fun to be had with *The End of Time* (2009-10) given its heavy responsibility to see off David Tennant's Tenth Doctor, but that's more than made up for in 2010's toasty *A Christmas Carol*. It's is a beautifully pitched reimagining of the Dickens classic with a rich central performance from Michael Gambon.

The Doctor, the Widow and the Wardrobe (2011) never quite lives up to the promise of its air-punchingly clever title, though there are some wallpaper-worthy visuals in there and a touching turn from Claire Skinner.

SPECIAL COLLECTOR'S EDITION
BBC
DOCTOR WHO
THE 10 CHRISTMAS SPECIALS

There are a lot of firsts about *The Snowmen* (2012); a new cossie for the Doctor, Clara's first appearance, a fresh TARDIS control room, the first proper appearance of the Paternoster Gang, as well as it kickstarting the Great Intelligence story arc. It feels satisfyingly epic and the razor-toothed Snowmen are one of the great, nightmare-bothering monsters of the Moffat era.

There's not much Christmas cheer in *The Time of the Doctor* (2013) and what there is feels awkwardly levered in (a town called Christmas?). Still, Matt Smith's final scene is just divine and the audaciously abrupt regeneration does something genuinely fresh with the concept.

That brings us up to Special Number 10, as the Doctor and Clara come face to face with Santa himself; a dour Nick Frost, who plays against expectations. *Last Christmas* from, er, last Christmas, is possibly Steven Moffat's finest festive moment; an impeccably crafted *Inception*-influenced adventure that looks even more ingenious the more you re-watch it.

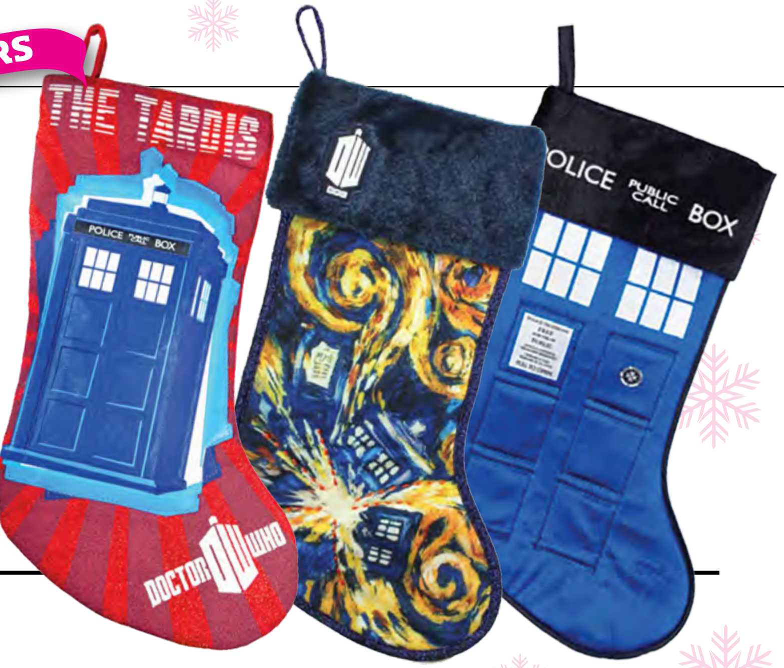
River, over to you... **STEVE O'BRIEN**

THINKGEEK
RRP £8.99 each

TARDIS stockings

Once upon a time, in the olden days, it would have felt weird having *Doctor Who* emblazoned on your Christmas accessories. Now, with the series at the heart of the TV schedules, *Doctor Who* has taken its rightful place in the celebrations. These Christmas stockings, courtesy of Thinkgeek, feel right at home in a well-decorated house in December. There's a choice of three: a blue TARDIS front door, the TARDIS against a patterned red background and – our favourite – Vincent Van Gogh's painting of the exploding TARDIS from *The Pandorica Opens*.

Sadly, they're not roomy enough to hold any big pressies. Instead it's probably best to use them for sweets, small presents (why not a subscription to **DWM**?) and maybe a satsuma ("You go through all those presents and right at the end, tucked away at the bottom, there's always one stupid old satsuma!"). Go on, you know it makes sense. **STEVE O'BRIEN**



THINKGEEK
RRP £4.99 each

Christmas tree ornaments

If, after *The Christmas Invasion*, you can bear having a Christmas tree in your living room (trust us, most don't come with lethal spinning blades), then you may want to populate it with *Who*-themed ornaments this year. Thinkgeek has rustled up a small collection of Xmas tree decorations, including a TARDIS, a gold Dalek, two Weeping Angels (one with regulation scary-face, the other shielding her eyes), a bauble illustrated with Vincent Van Gogh's exploding police box, K9, a Cyberman head and Davros. And although they look heavy, they're airy enough to hang on the tree without threatening to topple it over.

Our favourite is probably the Davros figurine, simply because having the walnut-faced leader of the Daleks hanging from your Christmas tree is guaranteed to be a talking point over the festive period ("Ugh, who's that?" "Oh him, that's the psychopathic leader of the most evil race in the universe. More eggnog?"). The Weeping Angels also come heavily recommended, if you want to give your tree a bit of 'edge' (put the one with the scary-face next to a standard Christmas tree fairy for maximum hilarity). And, brilliantly, once the festive season is over, you can simply hang them around your house for the year ahead. Sorted. **STEVE O'BRIEN**

DANLIO
RRP £8.99 each

2016 Calendars

Twelve Doctors, 12 months. This is the situation that, presumably, *Doctor Who* calendar makers have been waiting for for years.

For Danilo's 2016 *Official Doctor Who Calendar*s, there's a choice between a Twelfth Doctor-centric version (Clara, Osgood, Ashildr, Missy, Zygons *etc*) and this *Doctors of Our Time*, which begins the year with William Hartnell and ends with Peter Capaldi.

Doctors of Our Time is a beautifully designed piece of merchandise, with each Doctor Photoshopped against a starry background, and a great, incarnation-defining quote next to him; *eg*, "Courage isn't just a matter of not being frightened, you know. It's being afraid and doing what you have to do anyway." (Answers on a postcard).

BBC
DOCTOR WHO
OFFICIAL 2016 CALENDAR
DOCTOR WHO
OFFICIAL 2016 MINI-CALENDAR
POLICE PUBLIC CALL BOX
DOCTORS OF OUR TIME

There's even a bonus pic of John Hurt's 'War Doctor' ("Great men are forged in fire. It is the privilege of lesser men to light the flame"), if you want your calendar open as a 'Year to View'. And unlike too many calendars, there's plenty of space to scrawl important dates in there, so as soon as we find out when *Doctor Who* is coming back, be sure to note it down. **STEVE O'BRIEN**

CHARACTER
RRP £29.99

Cyberman Attack game

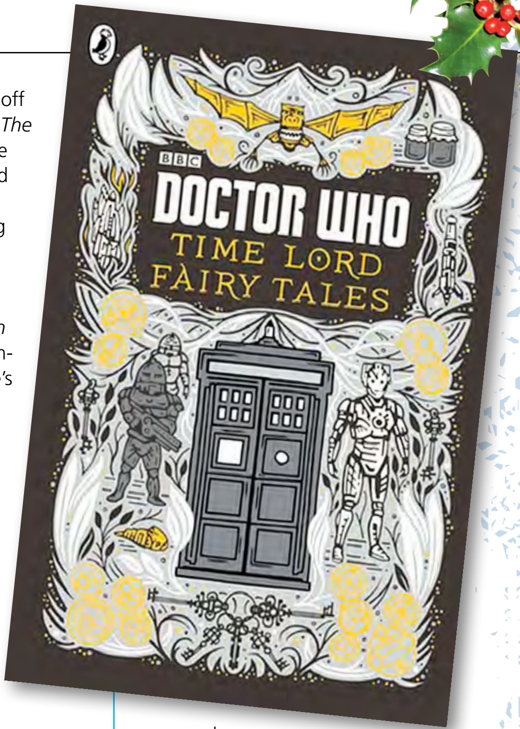
A few years ago, Character gave us a multi-function gun game, where the weapon was made from bits of a Dalek, Cyberman and Weeping Angel. It stood out as quite an odd idea for a *Doctor Who*-related toy; guns don't sit comfortably with the Doctor, despite how common they are in the series itself. This target-based game features a bright green blaster and a rather cute cartoon-style Cyberman, so it's not exactly striving for realism here, but still – guns for children. Hmm...

The aim of the game is to rack up direct hits to the advancing Cyberman, blocking its progress as your shots dismember it until, eventually, it either catches the player or it collapses in defeat. The Cyberman itself delivers a limited range of voice samples yet it feels rather derivative – imposing a *Doctor Who* character onto an existing format – and it doesn't really embody the ethos of the show. For one thing, guns have never been much good against our cybernetic pals. Also, the game is played against a timer, with just 30 seconds before the game is up, limiting the appeal of repeat play.

Clearly, I'm considerably older than the '5+' age rating, so perhaps it's more attractive to younger children who might enjoy the repetition. Then again, if we all found ourselves in the universe of the Doctor, the odds are we'd all be more likely to be cannon fodder than companion. Perhaps this is the training we all need. Cheery thought, eh? **JIM SANGSTER**

BBC BOOKS
RRP £12.99

Time Lord Fairy Tales



Given that *Doctor Who* often feels less like science-fiction than a modern fairy-tale – and never more so than on Steven Moffat's watch – it's surprising how few adventures have been directly inspired by children's fables. A cameo from Rapunzel in *The Mind Robber*, a touch of Beauty and the Beast (via Cocteau) in *Warriors' Gate* and Rose Tyler becoming the Big Bad Wolf are rare examples of bedtime stories reinvented as teatime thrills.

It's a situation that's remedied in style with *Time Lord Fairy Tales*, a handsome treasury of nursery favourites given a *Who*-themed makeover by Justin Richards. Once Upon a Time Lord, if you will.

Perhaps acknowledging that fairy-tales are as much an aesthetic as a state of mind, Richards largely confines the action to the familiar milieu of frozen forests and turreted castles, into which he gently introduces such hi-tech concepts as laser guns, interstellar cruisers and the odd space-time wormhole. The Big Bads of the original stories, meanwhile, are recast as entries from the *Doctor Who Monster Book* – so the green knight who challenges Sirgwain is actually an Ice Warrior, the troll under the bridge is a Sontaran and Little Rose Riding Hood (see what he's done there?) finds her grandma is a shape-shifting Zygon. (Talk about a sting in the tale.)

Consumed in one sitting, this could start to feel a bit repetitive, but Richards mixes up the formula by, for example, presenting the Eleventh Doctor as Cinderella's fairy godfather. (There are also appearances from Doctors Two, Nine, Ten and Twelve but, for the most part, our hero is elbowed out in favour of juvenile leads, as is only right.)

Several of the stories are as much re-tellings of *Doctor Who* classics as they are reimagined fairy tales. The excellent *Frozen Beauty* – in which the cryogenically preserved crew of a crashed spaceship is picked off by the Wirrn – is essentially *The Ark in Space*, with the sterile white Nerva Station replaced by a rusting wreck slowly surrendering to the creeping embrace of an alien forest. It's taut, atmospheric and utterly thrilling.

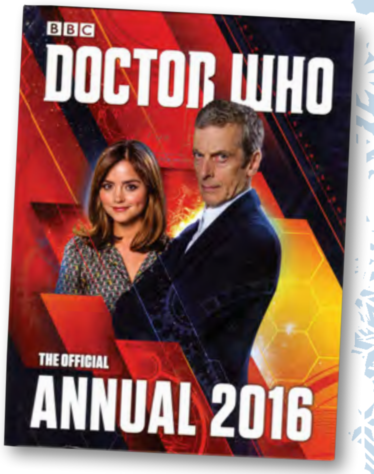
Even better is *The Garden of Statues* – basically a mash-up of *Blink* and Oscar Wilde's *The Selfish Giant*, with a once vibrant, happy garden turning to perpetual winter under the malevolent gaze of the Weeping Angels. It's a simple, effective – and, of course, timey-wimey – tale that serves to remind us what classic modern bogeymen the Angels are. Don't be surprised if people are still writing stories about *them* in 200 years' time.

Not all the entries are so successful. Some are simply too faithful to the original, while the tension is often neutered by the requirement for everyone to live Happily Ever After. For the most part, though, Richards does a fine job in giving these timeless tales a Time Lord twist – and full credit to him for taking on all 15 stories (even the *Brothers Grimm* got to split the work two ways). It's a real object of beauty, too, with David Wardle's gorgeous faux woodcuts adding an extra sprinkle of fairy dust to an enchanting collection. **PAUL KIRKLEY**

'Several of the stories are as much retellings of classic Doctor Who adventures, like *The Ark in Space,* as they are reimagined fairy tales.'

PENGUIN BOOKS
RRP £7.99

Doctor Who Annual 2016



It's that time of year when we dive into one of *Doctor Who*'s oldest, venerable traditions. The *Doctor Who Annual*. The 2016 edition of this much-loved book, opened by thousands of eager fans on Christmas morning is a bit of a treat. And yes, I am 43.

On the surface, this year's book is the tried and tested mix of monster fact files, puzzles and games, punched up with a two-part comic strip and a text story featuring the Paternoster Gang. It's a formula that's served the *Doctor Who Annual* well over recent years, like a feature-length seasonal special of *Doctor Who Adventures*.

Writer Paul Lang has pulled off that trick of compiling a *Doctor Who* book that's fun for the kids, while also appealing to the grown-ups that will be sneaking a peek. There's a cheeky wit throughout the colourful pages that manages to catch the tone of the current Doctor, with some sly winks to the show's heritage. A spread on Missy that gives her personal appraisal of previous incarnations is so brilliantly in character, it's hard not to laugh out loud. There's a natural leaning towards the most recent episodes, but seeing a picture of Roger Delgado smiling out at you beneath a frowning Michelle Gomez is a lovely thing to behold.

Attention to the details of the show's fiction, a warm sense of fun and an array of well-presented content marks the 2016 *Doctor Who Annual* out as a quality edition. **MARK WRIGHT**

BBC
DOCTOR WHO
COLOURING BOOK

PUFFIN BOOKS
RRP £9.99

Colouring Book

Colouring books are the latest craze! People of all ages are reaching for their colouring pencils and trying to stay in the lines.

With lots of themed colouring books already available (including fan-favourites *Sherlock* and *Harry Potter*), it's about time *Doctor Who* joined the craze. The visually-impressive planets, galaxies, villains and heroes have been translated into illustrations which are literally out of this world. The *Doctor Who: Colouring Book* displays a huge range of images, including alien worlds such as Gallifrey and Skaro, monsters such as Davros and the Zygons, and beautiful illustrations of the TARDIS. A memorable quote is displayed alongside each image. All incarnations of the Doctor feature, their profiles outlined and filled with intricately detailed and iconic images from their era of the series.

The book looks gorgeous. As you colour each page in, you have the creative power of bringing the *Doctor Who* universe to life. However, some of the illustrations are so complex that you would need to use very fine pens in order to do the images justice.

For people who love *Doctor Who* and are caught up in the colouring craze, this book is an absolute delight; a must-have for all creative *Who* fans, children and adults alike. The popularity of adult colouring has been linked to the need to relax in our busy world of social media. Colouring is creative and peaceful and allows us to escape from reality – in this case, into the world of the Doctor. **EMILY COOK**

MISSING IN ACTION!

FIRST BROADCAST
25 December 1965

The Feast of Steven

Let's throw the clock back 50 years to revisit the Doctor's very first Christmas Day appearance...

REVIEW BY **GARY GILLATT**

Down the years, great minds have pondered at length the unsolved mysteries of literature. Did wily Heathcliff, late of wiley Wuthering Heights, murder the brother of his beloved Cathy? Who would Dickens have fingered as the killer of Edwin Drood, if indeed he was killed at all? And, in James Joyce's inimitable *Ulysses* ("an oddball romp, 6/10"), who is the enigmatic 'man in the macintosh' who looms as 13th mourner at the funeral of Paddy Dignam? Theory upon thesis upon treatise have hazarded an identity for this brooding, brown-coated figure. It's like UNIT dating for literary wonks. Is he a physical manifestation of grief? Is it Joyce himself, haunting his own story? Anything is possible. As the novel's sometime protagonist Leopold Bloom muses, peering through the grey air of the graveyard: "Always someone turns up who you never thought of."

This observation is no less true of *Doctor Who*. The 1965 episode *The Feast of Steven* even has its own 'Man in Mackintosh', who turns up with his own unfathomable – indeed, almost unbearable – enigma. Man in Mackintosh is named as such in the credits of this demented seventh episode of the 1965 serial *The Daleks' Master Plan,* which we've gathered to discuss in this festive **DWM** thanks to its status as the first episode of *Doctor Who* to be broadcast on Christmas Day. And as this Dalek-free instalment self-consciously stands apart from the other eleven-twelfths of the Dalek epic, it can be also be described as *Doctor Who*'s first ever Christmas Special. Indeed, if Russell T Davies hadn't got his arse so spectacularly into gear in 2005, it would surely have proved *Doctor Who*'s *only* Christmas Special.

'Tis the season and all that, but Man in Mackintosh is not feeling particularly jolly as he pitches up at a provincial police station somewhere in the North of England. "They keep movin' me 'ouse..." he insists, jowls presumably a-wobble, to the Duty Sergeant. "Me green'ouse!" Our raincoated chum then adds, in a conspiratorial tone, a further cryptic detail: "It's the *revels*." These 'revels' perhaps hint at some callous Bullingdon Club-style bacchanalia, but beyond that we know nothing. The riddle of exactly *who* chose to hide Mackintosh's greenhouse – along with *how* and *where* and *why* – will forever remain, unlike the structure in question, entirely opaque. And here's another question. Are we supposed to be entertained by this? The greenhouse business is structured vaguely like a joke, and certainly played as if it's meant to be amusing – but it simply *isn't*. The whole episode suffers the same fatal flaw. *The Feast of Steven* is a shaggy dog story told by someone who doesn't quite know how to be funny. There are punch lines of a sort, but they serve as a cue for tumbleweed, not laughter. You keep wanting to ask our storyteller, "And then what happens?", in hopeful anticipation of some pay-off that never comes.

So eager is our episode for a titter or two, it even attempts a metafictional turn when the Doctor bumps into Mackintosh at the police station. "Haven't I met you somewhere before?" harrumphs the Doctor, before the penny drops. "Ah yes! The marketplace in Jaffa!" It's a reference to the fact that the Mackintosh actor, Reg Pritchard, also appeared in *Doctor Who* nine months earlier as market trader Ben Daheer (which is not, by-the-by, a name to be shouted out in polite company). The camera script for *The Feast of Steven* credits Terry Nation, but switches to a different typestyle for this brief exchange, one of many late rewrites that were likely made by director Douglas Camfield, who cast Pritchard in both roles. And it must be said that, as a writer, Camfield does indeed make an excellent director. Like the episode as a whole, it's clearly meant to be *funny*, but it merely grazes the lower limits of charming. It also raises the question of why the Doctor doesn't similarly recognise his own travelling companion Sara Kingdom, whose face he also saw in Jaffa – and far less fleetingly – worn by Princess Joanna, the all-too devoted sister of Richard the Lionheart.

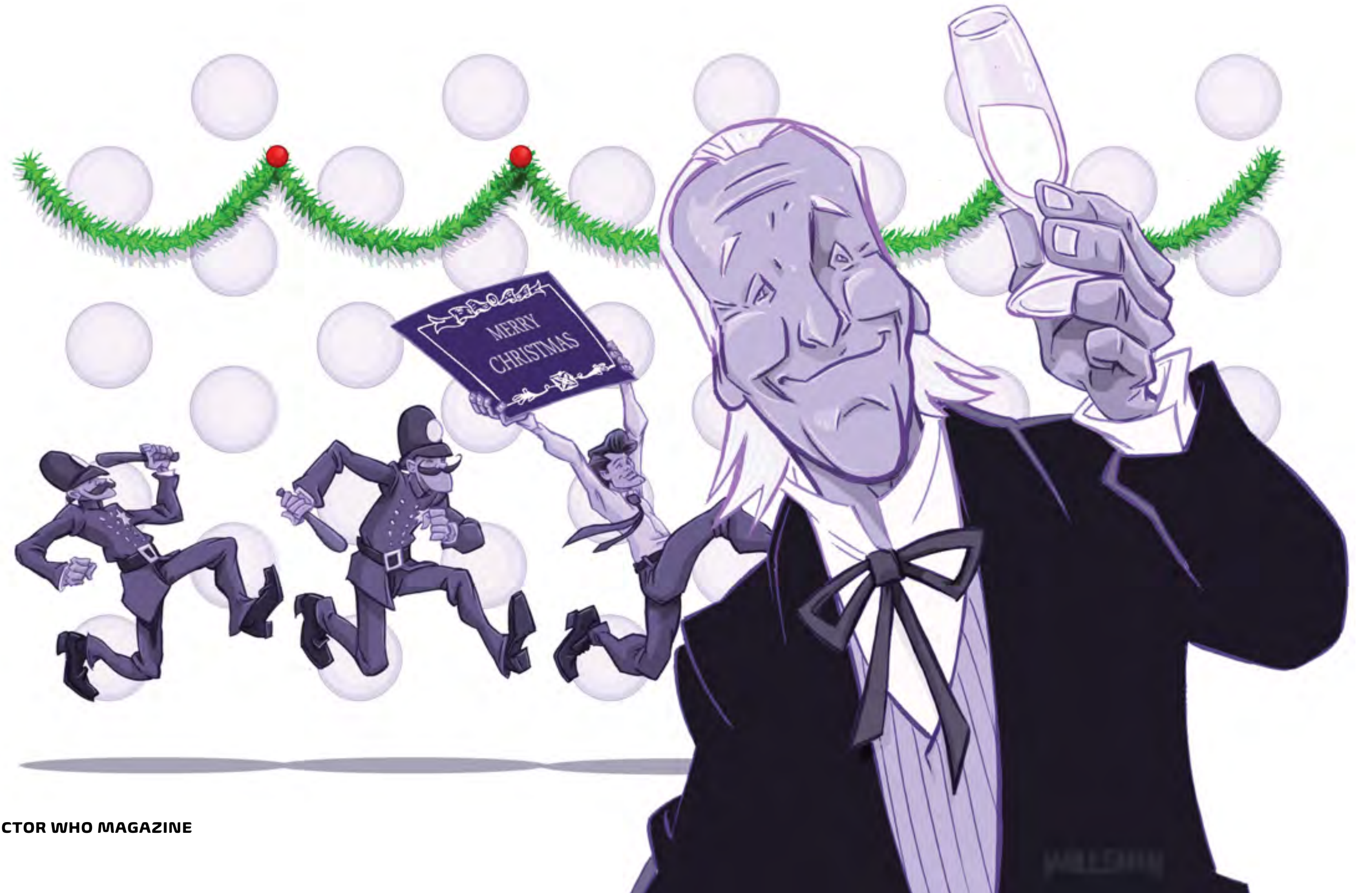


ILLUSTRATION: BEN WILLSHER

Sara Kingdom (Jean Marsh) momentarily forgets that she's just murdered her own brother.

'We might think of Hartnell's delight when the script for *The Feast of Steven* arrived, and there was not a Dalek to be found.'

Having once been cast as a princess, actress Jean Marsh makes Sara Kingdom *Doctor Who*'s poshest ever companion. Her accent is so cut and polished it could substitute for a segment of the Key to Time. She's a top agent for the Space Security Service, presumably having taken the traditional route for fastidiously-reared Central City *gels* of the year 4000, via Space Rodean and Space Swiss Finishing School. Sadly, Sara is not long for this world – or any other – and will die while in the Doctor's care, just five episodes later. (At this point in the series, he's having a bad run of that sort of thing.) Happily, actress Jean Marsh has since returned to the role of Sara for Big Finish, fetching up unexpectedly reincarnated as a big old house in Ely; a most fitting fate for the co-creator of *Upstairs Downstairs*.

No stranger to either Jean Marsh's upstairs or downstairs is Peter Purves, who plays the Doctor's other companion, Steven. Purves boasts in his autobiography that he enjoyed a fling with his co-star while they worked on *The Daleks' Master Plan*. Perhaps their wrestling with the lifeless script of *The Feast of Steven* spilled over into a post-production tumble. In which case it's nice to know that at least two people got a thrill out of it.

"A gentleman to boot!"

While Purves may have been quite the Lothario, Steven Taylor is a tough man to love. Catch him on a bad day and, well, you've met actual wasps that are less waspish. On a good day he's merely a pompous nag. He replies to the Doctor's orders with a respectful "Yes sir", but you hear enamel grinding from gritted teeth. Steven is a top pilot and a bit of a dish – in a generic kind of way – so he's not short on ego, and while he defers to the Doctor as his senior officer, you sense that Steven feels that he should be the star of his own story, and is waiting for a chance to dispatch the old bugger on a one-way trip to the planet Dignitas.

WRITTEN BY Terry Nation

STARRING

William Hartnell	Dr Who
Peter Purves	Steven
Jean Marsh	Sara Kingdom
Clifford Earl	Station Sergeant
Norman Mitchell	First Policeman
Malcolm Rogers	Second Policeman
Kenneth Thornett	Detective Inspector
Reg Pritchard	Man in Mackintosh
Sheila Dunn	Blossom Lefevre
Leonard Grahame	Darcy Tranton
Royston Tickner	Steinberger P Green
Mark Ross	Ingmar Knopf
Conrad Monk	Assistant Director
Steve Machin	Cameraman
Buddy Windrush	Prop Man
David James	Arab Sheikh
Paula Topham	Vamp
Clown	Robert G Jewell
Albert Barrington	Professor Webster
Paul Sarony	First Keystone Cop
Malcolm Leopold	Second Keystone Cop
Jack Le White	Igmar Knopf's Cameraman
Harry Davis	Make-up Man
William Hall	Cowboy
Jean Pastell	Saloon Bar Girl
M J Matthews	Chaplin

The Feast of Steven falls into two sections. Act One brings the TARDIS to the aforementioned police station, where, on venturing outside the ship, the Doctor is arrested for vagrancy and taken to the Inspector for questioning. Our hero is in a whimsical frame of mind, and gives us the episode's best scene when he's asked if he's English, Scottish or Welsh. "You really must think in a far bigger way than that!" the Doctor giggles. "Your ideas are too narrow! Too small! Too *crippled*!" "What are you then?" asks the inspector, his patience at an end. "I'm a citizen of the Universe!" chirrups the Doctor, "and a gentleman to boot!" He's showing off, but in retrospect there's something sweetly understated about the Doctor seeing himself merely as a citizen of the Universe. These days, he's the President of Earth; a hot mess of survivor guilt, self-regard and oh-poor-me-and-my-burden-of-wisdom – *blub blub, squish squish*. And he's become largely insufferable because of it. But back then, the Doctor saw his responsibilities as no more than those of any other civilised citizen: to play his part; to do his bit; to do no harm. While this all seems so sweet and innocent in retrospect, the scene also shows how far the series has come since its first episode, just two years earlier. Then, the Doctor was whipped into a fury by the fear that his secrets would be discovered; that a policeman might question him. Here, he cheerfully spills all to the rozzers about what his police box really is, and what it can do. "E's a nutter!" scoffs one copper, and the Doctor seems delighted. "Are you imputing that I am mentally deranged? Hmm? Heh!" The scene is intended as a joke, of course. What would it be like if the Doctor just told the truth for a change? And to a policeman?! Ha-ha! But this subversion of the show's rules proves so appealing that it immediately establishes itself as the norm.

Steven (Peter Purves) enjoys the feast.

All this whimsy clearly delights our star William Hartnell. We find him here, this Christmas Day, at the zenith of his success as Doctor Who. The character may have grown out of what was gifted to him on 35 pages of pastel Foolscap each week (like Hartnell himself, the Doctor was by turn flinty and frivolous, a man of quicksilver mood but essentially benevolent) but by this point in his *Doctor Who* journey the actor had experienced, in a very real way, the true Pied Piper power of the Doctor. During recording of the previous serial, our star had been flown from London to RAF Finningley, near Doncaster, to take part in the annual air show. In surviving silent cine film we see Hartnell in full costume waving from the back of a jeep, like a Pope blessing the faithful. (Actually, the film throbs with colour in the same way as the Zapruder footage of the assassination of JFK, so you half expect a sudden bloom of red and the Doctor to jerk forward and back.) The air show soon comes under attack from some uncharacteristically zippy Daleks made from modified go-carts. Jolly fun it may be, but we can only guess at the fierce pride felt by former Trooper Billy Hartnell – invalided from the Army after a nervous breakdown – when the moment came for him to call down an air strike from a Vulcan bomber, before being driven back through a crowd of adoring children to the Officers' Mess. And we might also think of his delight when the script for *The Feast of Steven* arrived and there was, within, not a Dalek to be found. This Christmas Day, Bill will be the star of his own show. No wonder he's having such a good time.

In this spirit, you feel that the Doctor might cheerfully chat the whole night away with the police. Unfortunately, Steven – having stolen a police uniform – comes to his rescue. For some reason, he adopts a full 'dey do dat doh don't dey doh' Scouse accent. When challenged by the Doctor, Steven explains: "Everyone else is doing it!" The trouble is, they're really not. There's a range of Northern accents to be heard, covering Bolton to Bradford, but Steven is the only Liverpudlian. We know that this episode was originally intended to feature the cast and sets of the hit police drama *Z-Cars*, which ended its first life as weekly drama just four days before transmission of *The Feast of Steven*. The *Z-Cars* production team swiftly arrested this development, but Steven's jokey accent surely stems from the fact that *Z-Cars* was set on Merseyside. The only other lingering ghost of the original idea is a reference by one policeman to the New Brighton Ferry. (Oddly, in the script, this is "the Brighton Ferry".) All this confusion only adds to the sense that, after the *Z-Cars* pastiche/crossover was lost, nobody knew quite what to do with these 10 minutes of TV. Without its cast of famous faces, we're left with four rambling policemen and a possible flasher who can't find his greenhouse. ►

◄ Meanwhile, Sara is crawling about on top of the TARDIS – off screen, unfortunately – trying to fix "the scanner eye". Her woolly jumpsuit is admired as fancy dress by another copper, who then – as she slips off into the ship – wishes her "a swinging time". With Peter Purves on board, that's guaranteed. Back in the relative sanity of the control room, our heroes pause to recall the wider context of their current adventure. "Is the Taranium safe?" asks the Doctor, reminding us that they have recently filched an 'emm' of Taranium from the Daleks, destined to fuel the terrible Time Destructor. (Emma Taranium is one of the great *Doctor Who* drag names. Along with Diamond Logo and Madeleine Cluster, she buys her gowns at Tracy's of Lucanol.) "The Daleks!" gasps Sara. "I'd forgotten them!" Which is a bit rum given that, just a few hours ago, Sara was hoodwinked into murdering her own brother as part of a Dalek scheme. She was clearly raised not to brood on such minor inconveniences. For the patient viewer, mention of the Doctor's great enemy raises the hope that they might soon crash this moribund Christmas shindig. Alas, what awaits us is something more terrible than even the Dalek conquest of all time and space.

A rehearsal shot of two Williams – Hall and Hartnell.

'*The Feast of Steven* is less what we now recognise as a *Doctor Who* Christmas episode than it is a *Children in Need* sketch.'

In a sawmill somewhere, a damsel is in distress. We soon join her. Blossom – a face of tear-streaked slap – is threatened with imminent bisection by Darcy, in Derby hat and wicked moustache. "My sawmill will take care of you!" vows dastardly Darcy. "And my secret will be safe forever!" Once again, we never learn the nature of this secret – perhaps he revels in the moving of greenhouses – because the action is interrupted by the arrival of the TARDIS crew, who give the rascal a sound thrashing. A wider shot reveals that we are on the set of a movie, and that Blossom and Darcy are merely actors in a film directed by the bullish Steinberger P Green, who conducts all conversation at demolition decibels. This pull-back out of fiction to reveal fact is the same gag Terry Nation used with the haunted house in *The Chase*, but here the TARDIS crew at least get to be in on the joke.

The BBC junked its video recording of *The Feast of Steven* long ago. Today, only the soundtrack of the episode, a handful of stills and 20 smeary off-screen photos remain as record. The irony is, for an adventure set during the age of silent cinema, it makes a right old racket, bordering on the unendurable. The Doctor and his companions run hither and yon, yelled at by all and sundry. Sexy Sara is hassled to join a Shiekh's harem in the latest exotic epic from arty director Ingmar Knopf ('Ker-nerf! Ker-nerf!'), Steven's police uniform has him dragooned into the Keystone Kops, even though a BBC budget means that the troupe's famous exploding car routine takes place off screen, with a cheapskate sound effect and cloud of dust. The Doctor quickly loses patience with the whole sorry affair. His response almost makes you glad the episode isn't around to be GIF-ed: "This is a madhouse!" he wails to Sara. "It's all full of Arabs!" The line isn't in the camera script, so one wonders if it was a Hartnell addition.

Looking back from a distance of 50 years, a police station and an old Hollywood studio may seem peculiar choices of setting for a Christmas edition of a show that claims all time and space as its playground. But when we consider what else was on TV that Christmas Night, we better understand the context of it all. *Doctor Who* was broadcast at 6.35pm. Earlier in the afternoon, BBC1 viewers enjoyed an episode of warm-hearted police drama *Dixon of Dock Green* – which would have looked very like the first half of *The Feast of Steven*. Over on BBC2 at 6.30pm, *When Comedy Was King* consisted of a compilation of clips from the greats of the silent cinema – which would have looked very like the second half of *The Feast of Steven*. The Doctor's Hollywood caper incorporates mentions of Keaton and Fairbanks, and even a brief appearance by someone we're expected to recognise as Chaplin. It concludes with the Doctor listening to the woes of a sad clown who plans to give up comedy for singing. The joke comes when he tells the Doctor his name. The big Christmas Day movie on BBC1 – one hour after *Doctor Who* finished – was *Road to Bali*, starring Bing Crosby.

HOW YOU CAN EXPERIENCE THIS EPISODE...

Audio soundtrack: *Doctor Who: The Lost TV Episodes Collection Two:* 1965-1966, out now

So it is that, even without the *Z-Cars* cast, *The Feast of Steven* works as a BBC Christmas 1965 mash-up, just about. It's less what we now recognise as a *Doctor Who* Christmas episode than it is a *Children in Need* sketch. Indeed, its closest *Doctor Who* DNA match is the *ne plus ultra* of *Children In Need* telly crossovers, *Dimensions in Time*.

But if you're looking for something closer in tone to a modern *Doctor Who* Christmas Special, then such a thing could also to be found in the festive season of 1965. Issues 732 to 735 of *TV Comic* saw Doctor Who banter with Santa, battle deadly snowmen, and ride a giant squirrel through the sky. Keep Santa and the snowmen, but swap the flying squirrel for a one-shark open sleigh, and you'll find much of the flavour of the Moffat era Christmas Special – all snowy rooftops and Victorian fairytale. It's a Christmastown more familiar from the feats of Steven than anything in *The Feast of Steven*.

There's not a lot of Christmas to be found in *Doctor Who*'s first Christmas episode. There's some brief carol singing and a few decorations at the police station, and then nothing in the second act. But it comes spectacularly good on its festive promise in the end. Having left Hollywood, the Doctor does something wholly unexpected. He produces a bottle of champagne and three glasses, and then peers straight down the lens of camera two to wish "a happy Christmas to all of you at home." It's dazzling in its chutzpah.

Happy Christmas to you too, Doctor Who! Just don't get too smashed on that champagne and go moving any greenhouses now, will you? DWM

The Doctor meets Bing Crosby!

Time for a festive toast!

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PRIZES TO BE WON!

Enter this month's competitions for the chance to win the very latest DVDs, CDs and books!

WIN! ONLY THE MONSTROUS BOX SET!

THE WAR DOCTOR
ONLY THE MONSTROUS
FULL CAST AUDIO DRAMA
DOCTOR WHO
STARRING JOHN HURT AND JACQUELINE PEARCE

John Hurt returns to the role of the War Doctor in 12 full-cast *Doctor Who* audio plays! The audio adventures of this mysterious incarnation of the Doctor will be told over four box sets, each containing three linked hour-long episodes.

The first box set, available this month from Big Finish, is called *Only the Monstrous*. It contains three stories written and directed by Nicholas Briggs. In *The Innocent,* the Daleks mass their time fleet for a final assault on Gallifrey. In *The Thousand Worlds,* the Doctor finds himself assigned to a rescue mission, but any room for manoeuvre is restricted by an area of space known as the Null Zone. In *The Heart of the Battle*, while trapped in a citadel swarming with Daleks, the Time Lord rescue force must find a way to overcome apparently insurmountable odds.

The cast of *Only the Monstrous* includes *Blake's 7* actress Jacqueline Pearce, who plays Time Lord Cardinal Ollistra – an arch manipulator waging the Time War against the Daleks.

Only the Monstrous is released this month, and will be followed in February by the second volume, *Infernal Devices.* All of these adventures can be ordered now from *www.bigfinish.com* as CD box sets or downloads, priced £20 per series.

DWM has **FIVE** box sets of *Only the Monstrous* to give away to readers who can answer this:

What words did the War Doctor shoot into a wall on Gallifrey in *The Day of the Doctor*?

- **A** NO MORE
- **B** NO LESS
- **C** NO NO NO NO NO NO NO NO NO NO NO NO THERE'S NO LIMIT

Phone* **09011 544 310** to enter (50p per call) and leave your details, or post your entry to the address below, starting with: "GALLIFREY STANDS!"

DOCTOR WHO
BRAND NEW ADVENTURES
THE INNOCENT
FULL CAST AUDIO DRAMA

DOCTOR WHO
BRAND NEW ADVENTURES
THE HEART OF THE BATTLE
FULL CAST AUDIO DRAMA

DOCTOR WHO
BRAND NEW ADVENTURES
THE THOUSAND WORLDS
FULL CAST AUDIO DRAMA

WIN! ALL CONSUMING FIRE CD!

All Consuming Fire is a brand new full-cast Seventh Doctor audio adventure, based on the original 1994 *Doctor Who: The New Adventures* novel written by Andy Lane.

The library of St John the Beheaded contains the most dangerous books in all creation, so when some of them are stolen who else should the Vatican call but Sherlock Holmes? Immediately, one of the possible suspects seems more suspicious than others. However, Holmes soon realises this suspect is also their greatest hope. They need the Doctor as much as he needs them.

All Consuming Fire stars Sylvester McCoy as the Doctor, Sophie Aldred as Ace and Nicholas Briggs as the great detective, Sherlock Holmes. It's available from *www.bigfinish.com* priced £14.99 on CD or £12.99 to download. We have **FIVE** copies of the CD to give away to readers who can answer this elementary question:

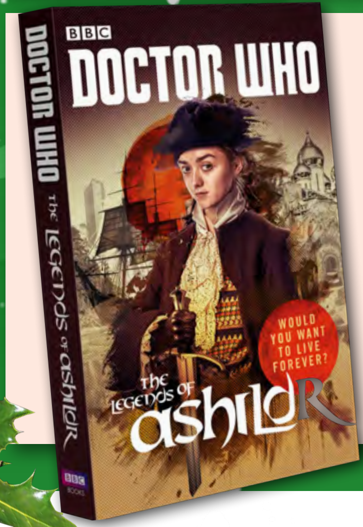
What is the name of Sherlock Holmes' medically-trained companion?

- **A** Dr John Smith
- **B** Dr John Watson
- **C** Dr Martha Jones

Phone* **09011 544 311** to enter (50p per call) and leave your details, or post your entry to the address below, starting with these Holmesian-inspired words: "ELEMENTARY, MY DEAR DOCTOR!"

DOCTOR WHO
BRAND NEW ADVENTURES
SYLVESTER McCOY, SOPHIE ALDRED AND LISA BOWERMAN IN
ALL-CONSUMING FIRE
BY ANDY LANE ADAPTED BY GUY ADAMS
FEATURING NICHOLAS BRIGGS HUGH FRASER
FULL CAST AUDIO DRAMA
THE AUDIO ADVENTURES OF DOCTOR WHO

WIN! LEGENDS OF ASHILDR BOOK!



BBC
DOCTOR WHO
WOULD YOU WANT TO LIVE FOREVER?
The Legends of Ashildr

Between the six centuries that separate *The Girl Who Died* and *The Woman Who Lived*, Viking girl Ashildr wandered the world, keeping diaries of her adventures. This time is chronicled in *The Legends of Ashildr*, a new hardback collection of four stories.

The Arabian Knights by James Goss is a science-fiction riff on Arabic folk-tale collection *Arabian Nights.* In Jenny Colgan's *The Triple Knife*, Ashildr discovers a band of cruel alien scientists who are studying the Black Death. David Llewellyn's story, *The Fortunate Isles*, catches up with her a few hundred years later as she sails alongside privateers. In Justin Richards' story, *The Ghosts of Branscombe Wood* Ashildr is confronted by the ghosts of her past.

The Legends of Ashildr is available now from BBC Books for £9.99, but we're giving away **TEN** copies to lucky readers who can correctly answer this question:

By what name is Ashildr known in *The Woman Who Lived*?

- **A** Lady Me
- **B** Little Miss You
- **C** Madam Us

Phone* **09011 544 312** to enter (50p per call) and leave your details, or post your entry to the address below, marking it with Ashildr's self-pitying remark to the Doctor: "YOU GAD ABOUT WHILE I TRUDGE THROUGH THE CENTURIES."

WIN! DOCTOR WHO COLOURING BOOK!

Get creative with this interactive *Doctor Who* book! *Doctor Who: Colouring Book* features the worlds, characters and monsters of *Doctor Who*.

Planets, galaxies, villains, heroes, all the Doctors, the TARDIS and the time vortex are intricately illustrated in this book which is packed with original *Doctor Who* art, beautifully rendered in black-and-white line drawings and awaiting a splash of colour from pens, pencils or paint.

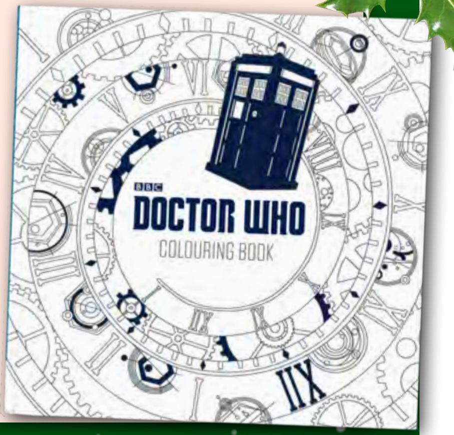
As well as 45 images to colour, the book features classic and timeless quotes from the TV series. There's also fun to be had searching for characters and items which have been hidden throughout the pages. It's the perfect gift for any creative *Doctor Who* fan.

Doctor Who: Colouring Book is available now and is priced at just £9.99. Thanks to the lovely people at Puffin Books, **DWM** has **FIVE** copies for readers who can correctly answer the following question:

What was the first *Doctor Who* story to be made and broadcast in colour?

- A *The Crimson Horror*
- B *The Green Death*
- C *Spearhead from Space*

Phone* **09011 542 221** to enter (50p per call) and leave your details, or post your entry to the address below, starting with: "PURPLE, GREEN AND BRILLIANT YELLOW! YES!"



ELISABETH SLADEN
NICHOLAS COURTNEY
DEBORAH WATLING
FROM CELEBRATED DOCTOR WHO DIRECTOR CHRISTOPHER BARRY
DOWNTIME
WITH BONUS MAKING OF DISC
THE BRIGADIER FACES A NEW BREED OF YETI AS HE SEARCHES TO FIND THE LOCUS

WIN! DOWNTIME DVD!

Downtime – first released on video in 1995 – is a science-fiction adventure featuring characters from the world of *Doctor Who*, including Brigadier Lethbridge-Stewart (Nicholas Courtney), Sarah Jane Smith (Elisabeth Sladen) and Victoria Waterfield (Debbie Watling). Written by Marc Platt and directed by Christopher Barry, the feature-length adventure is an unofficial sequel to the 1960s serials *The Abominable Snowmen* and *The Web of Fear*.

The story follows the Brigadier and Sarah Jane, who are investigating the New World University to search for a missing Locus which binds the power of the Great Intelligence. The battle is broadened when the Brigadier's family is threatened and UNIT faces a powerful new breed of Yeti!

Downtime is out now on DVD is published by Koch Media priced £9.99 and is available from Amazon. We have **FIVE** copies available to readers who can answer this question:

***Downtime* marks the first appearance of the Brigadier's daughter. What's her name?**

- A Kate
- B Winifred
- C Petronella

Phone* **09011 542 222** to enter (50p per call) and leave your details, or post your entry to the address below, starting with: "JUST LIKE OLD TIMES, EH? I STILL DON'T KNOW WHAT'S GOING ON!"

WIN! K9 AND COMPANY TALKING BOOK!

K9 and Company is the latest talking book from BBC Audio – a narrated version of the novelisation of the 1981 TV spin-off featuring Sarah Jane Smith and K9.

In the sleepy village of Hazelbury Abbas, the Winter Solstice is fast drawing near. Sarah Jane Smith comes to the village to write her new book. For company she has Brendan, the young ward of Sarah's missing Aunt Lavinia. Then Brendan too disappears, possibly kidnapped by practitioners of Black Magic. Is he to be sacrificed to the goddess Hecate on the Solstice? Sarah is not alone in her search for Brendan, for the Doctor has sent her a very special companion: his robotic dog, and second-best friend, K9!

John Leeson, who provided K9's voice in the TV series, reads Terence Dudley's 1981 novelisation of the TV production he scripted. The audiobook retails at £20, but we're giving away **FIVE** copies to readers who can answer this question:

Which of the following phrases would K9 be most likely to say?

- A Affirmative, Master.
- B Exterminate the Doctor!
- C Oh my dear Doctor, you have been naïve.

Phone* **09011 542 223** to enter (50p per call) and leave your details, or post your entry to the address below, starting it with this: "A DOG! A DOG BELCHING FIRE! I SWEAR! I SWEAR BY ARIANRHOD!"

BBC
DOCTOR WHO
K·9 AND COMPANY
TERENCE DUDLEY
READ BY JOHN LEESON

CHARLES DICKENS'
A CHRISTMAS CAROL
an all-new musical film by Anthony D.P. Mann
with Doctor Who's Colin Baker
A CHRISTMAS CAROL

WIN! A CHRISTMAS CAROL DVD!

Featuring Sixth Doctor Colin Baker as the Victorian writer Charles Dickens, this new musical adaptation of *A Christmas Carol* is a warm and humanistic re-telling of Dickens' oft-told and much-loved festive tale of Christmas ghosts and redemption.

Canadian actor and filmmaker Anthony DP Mann – who also portrays Scrooge in the film – brings this fresh adaptation to life. Mann's *A Christmas Carol* includes original songs and is the first adaption of the story to be set in Canada.

The film's all-region DVD release coincided with its world theatrical première in Canada on 28 November 2015. The DVD also includes a selection of special bonus features.

This limited-edition DVD is available in time for the festive season from *www.christmascarol.ca* priced at $19.99 (Canadian dollars). We have **FIVE** copies to give away to readers who can answer this question:

What is Ebeneezer Scrooge's typical response to being wished a merry Christmas?

- A "And a happy new year!"
- B "You don't even know what a Peri is, do you?"
- C "Bah! Humbug!"

Phone* **09011 542 224** to enter (50p per call) and leave your details, or post your entry to the address below, marking it with Tiny Tim's words: "GOD BLESS US, EVERY ONE."

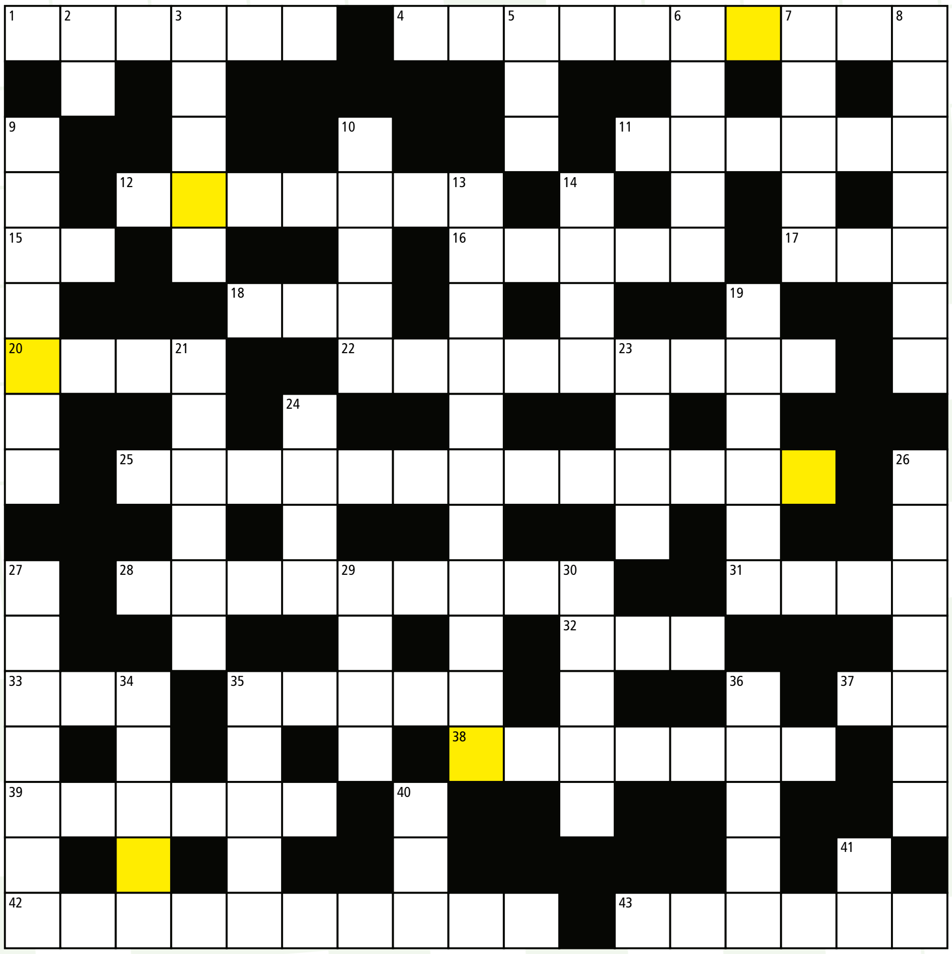
HOW TO ENTER

***BY PHONE:** Calls cost 50p plus your telephone company's network access charge. Always ask the bill payer before calling. Competition lines open on Thursday 10 December 2015 and close at midnight on Wednesday 6 January 2016. Service Provider: Spoke, 0333 202 3390 **BY POST:** Send to **Doctor Who Magazine** 494, PO Box 503, Leicester, LE94 0AD. Write your answer and details on a postcard OR the back of a stuck-down envelope ONLY please (sorry, but sealed envelopes containing entries for one or several competitions will not be opened), to reach us by 9 January 2016. **TERMS AND CONDITIONS:** Competitions are not open to employees of **Doctor Who Magazine**, printers and anyone else connected with the printers and their families. Winners will be the first correct entries drawn after the closing date. No purchase necessary. No responsibility can be accepted for postal entries that are lost or damaged. **DWM** will not enter into any correspondence. Winners' names will be available on request.

Christmas CROSSWORDS

Do you know your Santa from your Senta? You do? Well then, can you complete this perplexing puzzle?

PRIZE CROSSWORD!



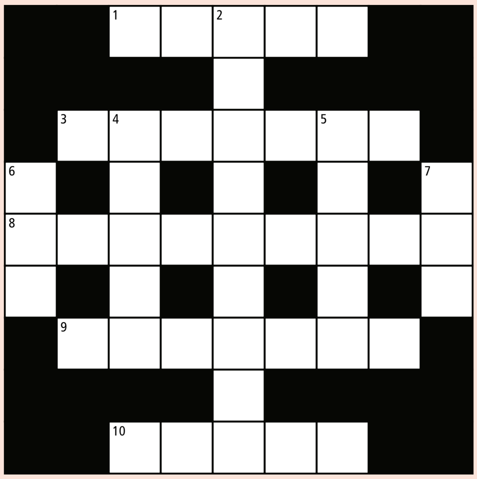
ACROSS

1 (and 13 Down) *Titanic* journey (6,2,3,6)
4 Hidden part of London (4,6)
11 Doppelgänger of Strella and Astra (6)
12 New Year's Day episode of *Doctor Who* (7)
15 Production code of story featuring 6 Down (1,1)
16 Creatures that the Tritovore resembled (5)
17 Another name by which Sutekh is known, according to the Doctor (3)
18 Where the Doctor met Erato – the ___ (3)
20 (and 28 Across) When the Doctor met Santa (4,9)
22 *Doctor Who* artist (10)
25 One of the husbands of River Song (4,9)
28 See 20 Across
31 Rory Williams' best man (4)
32 She was afraid of clowns (3)
33 Glitz won one in a card game (3)
35 One of the children of *Starship UK*(5)
37 The Doctor's nickname for Danny Pink (1,1)
38 See 21 Down
39 Paperback imprint of the *Doctor Who* novelisation range (6)
42 Pioneer of the Morpheus process (10)
43 Zygon who adopted the form of Clara (6)

JUST FOR FUN!

MINI CRYPTIC CROSSWORD

More puzzling matters! Can you unscramble these knotty clues?



CLUES

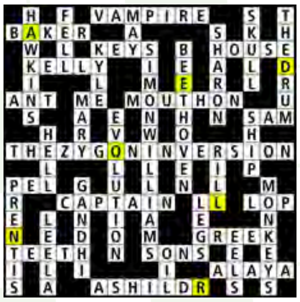
1 Master, she had a hand in her death (5)
2 Auton attack to kill Krillitane (9)
3 Queen backed into dodgy deals to get Weed killer (7)
4 Part of scavenger played by Foster (5)
5 Slaves figure in my plan for Third Doctor (5)
6 Even Osiris has brutal Winters (1,1,1)
7 Last to see *The Underwater Menace*? Margaret, perhaps (3)
8 Spouse runs rings around glitching robot – that's singular! (5,4)
9 Sounds like we should reply to director from another dimension (7)
10 Rassilon's staff an ally for Leela (5)

DOWN

2 Production code of *The Ice Warriors* (1,1)
3 The Last Centurion, perhaps (5)
5 Auntie had one that belonged to the Corsair (3)
6 King of Atlantis (5)
7 Dai from *The Green Death*, or Gareth from *Army of Ghosts* (5)
8 The Daleks intended him to be the first victim of the Time Destructor (7)
9 The Doctor's nickname for 43 Across (7)
10 The Doctor also knew him as Jeff (5)
13 See 1 Across
14 Partial description of the Confession Dial (4)
19 (and 27 Down) He played Rassilon (6,7)
21 (and 38 Across) Shop girl known to Mickey Smith (6,7)
23 Location of unexpected portal to the Zygon base found in Clara's block of flats (4)
24 Bloodthirsty creature (4)
26 Creature that is heaven sent? (3,4)
27 See 19 Down
29 Area of the Thal Dome that Sarah and Sevrin tried to escape from (4)
30 Kathy Nightingale's daughter (5)
34 A Trojan (5)
35 Famous for its forest (5)
36 _____ *Keys to Doomsday* (5)
40 Mined by humans for the Macra (3)
41 The Doctor recited it to distract himself from an attack by BOSS (2)

ANSWERS NEXT ISSUE

LAST ISSUE'S SOLUTION



LAST ISSUE'S PRIZE WORD: LEANDRO

WIN! BLU-RAY BOX SETS!

This festive box set, avaliable now on DVD and Blu-ray, contains all the *Doctor Who* Christmas Specials shown between 2005 and 2014, featuring David Tennant, Matt Smith and Peter Capaldi as the Doctor. The episodes included on the box set are *The Christmas Invasion* (2005), *The Runaway Bride* (2006), *Voyage of the Damned* (2007), *The Next Doctor* (2008), *The End of Time* Parts One and Two (2009-10) *A Christmas Carol* (2010), *The Doctor, the Widow and the Wardrobe* (2011), *The Snowmen* (2012) *The Time of the Doctor* (2013) and *Last Christmas* (2014). Thanks to BBC Worldwide, we have **FIVE** Blu-ray sets, worth £34.99, to give away to readers who can complete the prize crossword (left) and rearrange the letters in the yellow squares to form a character who appeared in one of the Christmas Specials featured on this set.

Phone **09011 542 232** to enter, or post your answer to the address on the opposite page, starting with: "HAVE YOU EVER SEEN A BRIDE WITH POCKETS?"

BT calls cost 51p per call. Cost from other networks may be higher. Always ask the bill payer before calling. Competition lines open on Thursday 10 December 2015 and close at midnight on Wednesday 6 January 2016. Service Provider: Spoke, 0333 202 3390. For full terms and conditions see page 93. Postal entries must reach us by 9 January 2016.

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INCLUDES NEW BONUS FEATURE & CHRISTMAS CARDS
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DOCTOR WHO
THE 10 CHRISTMAS SPECIALS
3 DISCS
12

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The Legends of Ashildr

RELEASED 10 DECEMBER

IN A NUTSHELL: Ashildr, a young Viking girl, died helping the Doctor and Clara to save her village. Brought back to life by the Doctor using alien technology, she is now immortal – the woman who lived. Since then, Ashildr has kept journals, detailing her extraordinary life. *The Legends of Ashildr* is a glimpse of some of those stories: the terrors she has faced, the battles she has won, and the treasures she has found. These are tales of a woman who lived longer than she should ever have lived – and lost more than she can even remember.

At least 600 years separate *The Girl Who Died* and *The Woman Who Lived*; 600-ish years where Maisie Williams' Ashildr wandered the world, keeping diaries of her adventures. We got a glimpse at them, of course. She founded a leper colony, fought in the Battle of Agincourt, lost her children to the plague. But the immortal's giant, creaking library suggested so much more.

Enter *The Legends of Ashildr*, a paperback collection of four short stories that not only fills in some of the gaps, but fleshes out a few things we already know. "It just seemed like the obvious thing to do," says Justin Richards, creative director of BBC Books' *Doctor Who* line. "She's an interesting character and the stories are very well spaced out between those two episodes. I think you're able to see a change in her, as she gets older and goes through stuff that is quite traumatic."

The Legends of Ashildr's first story is *The Arabian Knights* by James Goss, a science-fiction riff on Arabic folk-tale collection Arabian Nights, which stars the beautiful Lady Sherade, who must regale a king with stories about a mysterious youth called Ash El Dir. How Ashildr – or her journals – fit into this is a spoiler, but according to Goss she's "still very much wanting to get the fairytale ending of 'living happily ever after'."

That doesn't last. For over the course of the stories are events that chip away at her humanity, leaving a gulf between an innocent Viking girl and the jaded Knightmare. One such event is the death of her three children – a huge, defining moment that's opened up in Jenny Colgan's *The Triple Knife*, where Ashildr discovers a band of cruel alien scientists who are studying the Black Death, but will offer her no cure. It's here where she agonises over that spare immortality chip.

"That death scene was one of those things where I wrote it and then I didn't want to look at it again for a very long time," she explains. "It was really difficult to write. Because if you're writing a diary to stop yourself from having any more children, what would you say? It's quite rough, it's quite raw.

"I remember reading the scripts and feeling furious with the Doctor. It's a terrible thing that he did. And the fact that he is, more or less, immortal, he knows how tough it is. He knows what it's like to lose a child."

David Llewellyn's story, *The Fortunate Isles*, catches up with her a few hundred years later. Her cynicism now rooted, she sails alongside privateers, hoping to find the titular Isles of Legend.

"By the time my story starts she's a little bit wild and well on her way to being the Knightmare," explains David. "The story opens with her stealing something, and ends with her seeing people at their worst. Long periods at sea tend to bring out the worst in people. For Ashildr to be as cynical as she is in *The Woman Who Lived*, I figured she would have to have been around some very cynical, self-serving people."

Finally, there's Richards' story, *The Ghosts of Branscombe Wood*. Set just 51 years before *The Woman Who Lived*, it sees Ashildr (now calling herself Me) arrive in London, only to be confronted by the – literal – ghosts of her long and weary past. Fittingly for a final story, it's one of reflection – a time to settle down.

The woman who lived... and lived... and lived.

"I think she's trying to find herself," says Richards. "She's decided she wants to move on, live somewhere else, but she's not really sure what she wants to do. She's disenchanted with life. She doesn't like to form attachments to people, because she knows they're not going to be around that long and they may let her down in that time.

"It's interesting because, compared to the Doctor, you've got a central character who behaves very differently, who has a very different view of the world. You have to go that bit darker just because that's the way she is." **STEPHEN KELLY**

> **"Ashildr is an interesting character and the stories are very well spaced out between *The Girl Who Died* and *The Woman Who Lived.*"**
>
> **JUSTIN RICHARDS WRITER**

AUDIO DRAMA

BIG FINISH
RRP £20 (CD), £20 (download)

Only the Monstrous

RELEASED 31 DECEMBER

IN A NUTSHELL: The War Doctor, the secret incarnation of the Time Lord, has shunned the title 'Doctor' in order to fight in the Time War against the Daleks, alongside arch manipulator and Time Lord Cardinal Ollistra. This is the story of the man who refuses to call himself 'the Doctor'…

Two years after he appeared on screen as the previously unknown incarnation of the Doctor who fought in the Time War, Sir John Hurt is returning to *Doctor Who*, reprising that role in new audio series *The War Doctor*.

"We touched base with BBC Wales, just to see how Steven Moffat would feel about the prospect," explains Big Finish producer David Richardson, "and got a really encouraging and positive response. There was a feeling that he really liked the idea of that character being explored more. Because he only had one story on television, it was an opportunity to see that whole 'era' opened up, like we have with Paul McGann's Eighth Doctor."

The story begins with *Only the Monstrous*, comprised of three hour-long adventures by Nicholas Briggs.

"The fundamental idea is this dilemma that no matter how much you want peace and think war's a bad idea, sometimes, with certain enemies, perhaps you can't apply those standards," Nick explains. "That's quite intriguing for me, because that's the opposite of what the Doctor says in every other story. But I've put him in this extreme situation, which is what the Time War is, where he has to espouse a view that is anathema to him."

More tales of the War Doctor are revealed in *Only the Monstrous*.

These episodes introduce Cardinal Ollistra, a victory-obsessed Time Lord who appears throughout *The War Doctor*, played by Jacqueline Pearce.

"I thought it would be another Servalan – Mark 72! – so I hope I've made enough difference in the character for people not to think that," says Jacqueline, referring to her famous *Blake's 7* character. "I'm enjoying playing her very much. She's tough. Unemotional. She's a great believer in war, I think, and in winning at all costs."

"She is like the War Doctor, but with masses of authority, and no conscience at all," adds Nick, "whereas he is always pricked by his conscience. He has done terrible things, and continues to have to do terrible things, but he always struggles, and sometimes pulls back from it. She doesn't hesitate."

"In the course of the War Doctor stories, there will be, to some extent, companion-type roles," reveals David. "But Ollistra is very much a counterpoint to the Doctor. She's the other star of the series, and there's going to be some beautiful, dramatic confrontations between them.

"What I find so tremendously exciting about the War Doctor is that, in a way, it's *Doctor Who* with a lot of rules taken away," David continues. "It's basically when the Doctor stops, by choice, being the Doctor, in order to have to do terrible things, to try to achieve the best outcome. It's really driven us to try to tell really different, and darker, and provocative stories. Across the four box sets, there have been times that I've rejected storylines, just because they might have bordered too close to being traditional *Doctor Who* – and these are totally *not* traditional *Doctor Who*. They're a completely different animal."

"And John is quite wonderful," Jacqueline smiles. "That voice is so amazing. He's magic."

DAN TOSTEVIN

All information correct at the time of going to press.

IN THE SHOPS…

Your guide to the *Doctor Who* books, audios and magazines available soon…

DECEMBER

THURSDAY 10

BOOK

- ***The Legends of Ashildr*** BBC Books, £9.99

BBC
DOCTOR WHO
DOCTOR WHO THE LEGENDS OF ASHILDR
WOULD YOU WANT TO LIVE FOREVER?
The Legends of Ashildr

WEDNESDAY 16

BOOK - PARTWORK

- ***Doctor Who: The Complete History* Issue 8** Panini, £9.99

THURSDAY 17

MAGAZINE

- **DWM Special 42: The 2016 Yearbook** Panini, £5.99

WEDNESDAY 30

BOOK - PARTWORK

- ***Doctor Who: The Complete History* Issue 9** Panini, £9.99

THURSDAY 31

AUDIO DRAMAS

- ***You Are the Doctor and Other Stories*** [Seventh Doctor] by various authors. Big Finish, £14.99 (CD), £12.99 (download)
- ***Theatre of War*** [Seventh Doctor] by Justin Richards. Big Finish, £14.99 (CD), £12.99 (download)
- ***All Consuming Fire*** [Seventh Doctor] by Andy Lane. Big Finish, £14.99 (CD), £12.99 (download)
- ***Only the Monstrous*** [War Doctor] by Nicholas Briggs. Big Finish, £20 (CD/download)
- ***Torchwood: One Rule*** by Joseph Lidster. Big Finish, £9.99 (CD), £7.99 (download)

AUDIO READING

- ***Black Dog*** [Fourth Doctor] by Dale Smith Big Finish, £2.99 (download)

MAGAZINE

- **Doctor Who Adventures Issue 10** Panini, £3.99

JANUARY

THURSDAY 7

MAGAZINE

- **DWM Issue 495** Panini, £4.99

TALKING BOOKS

- ***State of Decay*** [Fourth Doctor] by Terrance Dicks. BBC Audio, £20 (CD)
- ***The Witch Hunters*** [First Doctor] by Terrance Dicks. BBC Audio, £25 (CD)

WEDNESDAY 13

BOOK - PARTWORK

- ***Doctor Who: The Complete History* Issue 10** Panini, £9.99

WEDNESDAY 27

BOOK - PARTWORK

- ***Doctor Who: The Complete History* Issue 11** Panini, £9.99

FRIDAY 29

AUDIO DRAMAS

- ***The Isos Network*** [Second Doctor] by Nicholas Briggs. Big Finish, £14.99 (CD), £10.99 (download)
- ***The Churchill Years*** by various authors Big Finish, £20 (CD), £20 (download)
- ***The Diary of River Song*** by various authors. Big Finish, £20 (CD), £20 (download)
- ***Torchwood: Uncanny Valley*** by David Llewellyn. Big Finish, £9.99 (CD), £7.99 (download)
- ***The Waters of Amsterdam*** [Fifth Doctor] by Jonathan Morris. Big Finish, £14.99 (CD), £12.99 (download)
- ***Wave of Destruction*** [Fourth Doctor] by Justin Richards. Big Finish, £10.99 (CD), £8.99 (download)

THE DEFINITIVE GUIDE TO THE MAKING OF DOCTOR WHO
BBC
DOCTOR WHO
THE COMPLETE HISTORY
STORIES 240-241
THE DAY OF THE DOCTOR AND THE TIME OF THE DOCTOR

AUDIO DRAMA

BIG FINISH
RRP £14.99 (CD), £12.99 (download)

Theatre of War

RELEASED 31 DECEMBER

IN A NUTSHELL: Years ago, an archaeological expedition came to Menaxus to explore the ruins of an ancient theatre. All but one of the team died. Now the only survivor has returned, determined to uncover the theatre's secrets…

A number of *Doctor Who* novels from the 1990s have been adapted as audio dramas in the last few years, but 1994's *Theatre of War* is the first to be tackled by its original author.

"I hadn't read it since I wrote it, which is 20 years ago now, so coming back to it was interesting," smiles Justin Richards. "I thought – naïvely, I suppose – that given I'd got a Word file of it somewhere, I could just go through and cut out all the description, and I'd have lots of dialogue that I could use as the basis of the script. But it turned out not to work like that! There was far too much of it, for one thing.

"So in fact, the way I did it was to go back to the original outline, and tweak that to fit with how the book really was, and then write it fresh from that outline as if it was an outline for an audio script. For various scenes, I went back and re-read how it worked out in the book, so there are bits of dialogue and things lifted from the book, but for the most part, I wrote it again."

The story served as the introduction of Irving Braxiatel, who's since become an important recurring character in various audio ranges.

"The name was introduced in [1979's] *City of Death* by Douglas Adams – they talk about 'the Braxiatel Collection' – and then the novels picked up on that," producer Cavan Scott reminds us. "Brax went on to become a friend and foe of Benny over the years in the *Bernice Summerfield* audio plays, and has also been in *Gallifrey*, but has never been in a *Doctor Who* – so we thought it was good fun to go back to the beginning, and see how he and Benny meet."

"I was expecting the dynamic to be quite different, and it wasn't," admits Lisa Bowerman, who plays companion Benny, and has played scenes with Brax since 2001. "Obviously there isn't that familiarity they end up having with each other, but the sparring between them happens really quite early on! I think that's the nature of Benny anyway, that's the way she interacts with people – she doesn't stand in awe of people. She doesn't undermine people, and she's not rude to people, but I think she just doesn't take hierarchy very seriously. I think the character of Brax probably appreciates that."

"He's away from the main action for most of the time," adds Justin, "doing things behind the scenes, manipulating stuff. So he's very much the Braxiatel that we get to know later, but it's interesting playing him as a character that Benny doesn't know already."

Theatre of War is the first time Brax has shared scenes with the Doctor on audio. "There are some great scenes that Sylvester [McCoy, the Seventh Doctor] has played, with that sort of sibling rivalry going on," Cav reveals. "When he says 'Braxiatel', you can tell there's a history there…"
DAN TOSTEVIN

Sylvester McCoy with some of the team behind *Theatre of War*.

> **"I'm a massive Holmes nut… and this is Sherlock Holmes, and it's Watson, and it's everything I love, mixed up in *Doctor Who*!"**
>
> **CAVAN SCOTT PRODUCER**

AUDIO DRAMA

BIG FINISH
RRP £14.99 (CD), £12.99 (download)

All-Consuming Fire

RELEASED 31 DECEMBER

IN A NUTSHELL: The Library of St John the Beheaded contains the most dangerous books in all creation. When some of them are stolen, Sherlock Holmes teams up with the Doctor to save humanity…

By popular demand, the 1994 novel which saw the Doctor meet Sherlock Holmes is being revived as an audio play.

"It's the one everyone asks for," says producer Cavan Scott. "Constantly! It was a very popular book. "Also, I'm a massive Holmes nut, so when I was asked to do a few of these adaptations, it was one I really wanted to do – it's Sherlock Holmes, and it's Watson, and it's everything I love, mixed up in *Doctor Who*! So it was a mixture of it being one everyone wants, one a lot of people know about, and it just being a cracking good read as well."

Guy Adams adapted Andy Lane's original text.

"I think it's enduringly popular because it's Sherlock Holmes and the Doctor in an exciting romp with aliens," Guy smiles. "Not to lessen Andy's work in any way, but I think that alone is enough, because the excitement around the team-up is a big part of its appeal – the fact that it's an enjoyable book is almost incidental, if you like, to that. It's just *fun*."

Narration is used to drive the story forward. "I think Watson telling you the story, when it's a Sherlock Holmes story, feels utterly natural," points out Guy. "The idea that Watson is going to be – at times, in quite flowery prose – telling you this tale immediately feels comfortable to a listener. The narration's terribly helpful for the visual aspects of Andy's novel. It's also terribly helpful to speed things along – 'And so we went to Holborn'. It was a very useful tool to whittle, to keep the original tone and flavour, and keep it pacey. You want this to be an energetic couple of hours, basically."

The investigators are firmly in the spotlight. "There is a lot of Holmes and Watson," nods Lisa Bowerman, who plays companion Benny, "and Ace is somewhere else, reporting back to the Doctor, so she's not as involved in the action as maybe everybody else is."

"The first two episodes are effectively a Sherlock Holmes story, with the Doctor," adds Guy. "Watson's saying 'I'm used to someone a bit more convinced about matters', and finding it quite bizarre to be with someone that's so vague and mad!"

Nicholas Briggs, who plays the title character in Big Finish's *Sherlock Holmes* range, reprises his role here. "Sherlock Holmes has this compulsion to analyse anything new," Nick observes. "The moment he sees something, he sees a billion clues all over it, and he can identify them and tell you all sorts of interesting things about someone. So he assumes he can do that with the Doctor, and there's this marvellous scene where, without thinking, he goes into that routine, and finds that he's unable to read anything. He fixates on some mud, but then realises he can't tell what kind of mud it is – because it's from another planet!

"I find it fascinating that he doesn't just dismiss the Doctor. The Doctor becomes a conundrum for him to solve…" **DAN TOSTEVIN**

AUDIO DRAMA

BIG FINISH
RRP £14.99 (CD), £12.99 (download)

You Are the Doctor and other stories

RELEASED 31 DECEMBER

IN A NUTSHELL: Four new stories starring the Seventh Doctor and Ace. *You Are the Doctor, Come Die With Me, The Grand Betelgeuse Hotel* and *Dead to the World*.

Big Finish's occasional strand of anthology releases, featuring four single-episode adventures, is back.

"The 25-minute timescale is rather good," observes guest star Jon Culshaw. "It makes it very pacey, it makes it quite sparky, without being rushed. If you need a little fix of *Doctor Who*, but you haven't got time to go through an entire box set, you can have one of these like a little shot – a little jäegerbomb of *Doctor Who*!"

"Having four stories to do over two days, rather than just one, is interesting and fascinating, and actually rather good fun," smiles Sylvester McCoy, who plays the Seventh Doctor. "It's also quite intense, because each story's got to have a beginning, middle, and end, and you've got to do that much quicker."

"This one is really lovely, because there is a bit of a story arc going on – which is Ace driving the TARDIS!" laughs Sophie Aldred, who plays Ace. "The TARDIS always ends up in the wrong place anyway, let's face it. But Ace makes it go even more awry than ever, and that is what brings these stories together."

Christopher Cooper scripted the third adventure, *The Grand Betelgeuse Hotel*.

"It was an interesting challenge, because what you want to try to do is hint that there's more going on than you've got in that 25 minutes," Christopher points out. "The structure of mine is stuff that's going on in a courtroom, and then a hint that more stuff is going to go on, or has gone on. So you kind of cheat the 25 minutes, and suggest that there's maybe 45 or more in there."

The title story is John Dorney's interactive *You are the Doctor*.

"You get to make the choices about what happens," John explains. "It's a choose-your-own-adventure story, which is also a parody of choose-your-own-adventure stories, while hopefully also being a fun and entertaining story in its own right, which also works if you don't bother choosing and just listen to it straight through! You can play the game, and press stop, and end when you get killed off – cos you *do* get killed off! – or start at the beginning and go straight through to the end, and still have a perfectly fine and entertaining time.

"I'd always had the notion of doing a choose-your-own-adventure story in the back of my head," he continues. "I thought it would probably be workable. It was always just sat there as an 'I don't know where this is for, or when it will happen, or precisely how it would fit anything' idea. But it seemed to be a perfect fit for a one-parter."

"I can't wait to hear people's reaction to it, when they play that game and listen to it," Sylvester grins. "It's quite an adventure..." **DAN TOSTEVIN**

AUDIO DRAMA

BIG FINISH
RRP £14.99 (CD), £10.99 (download)

The Isos Network

RELEASED 29 JANUARY

IN A NUTSHELL: The Doctor, Jamie and Zoe leave Earth having defeated a Cyberman invasion, but something is escaping through the mass of vaporising debris. Drawn to a mysterious planet, the Doctor and his friends find an old enemy lurks beneath the streets...

Doctor Who audio dramas often form sequels to televised adventures, but *The Isos Network* is the most direct yet, picking up just moments after 1968's *The Invasion*.

"The brief to me was to do a Second Doctor and Cybermen story," explains writer Nicholas Briggs. "I thought, 'Can we invent *another* way in which the Second Doctor accidentally bumped into the Cybermen on a planet doing something?' – he did quite a few Cybermen adventures! – and then I thought, 'What if one of those Cyber-ships that you see blowing up at the end of *The Invasion* gets away, or deposits a pod that goes off, and the Doctor just happens to catch sight of that?'. He can't let them get away, so it's all about the Doctor chasing that Cyber-ship, and arriving somewhere that explains where all the Cybermen came from to invade Earth in the first place."

The chase takes them to a deserted city on Isos II.

Wendy Padbury and Frazer Hines lead the cast and crew of *The Isos Network*.

"I like to think of things from the point of view of, 'If they were TV productions from that time'," Nick continues. "You could do a deserted city, because it would have meant you didn't have to have a cast of thousands – you'd just have a nice model shot, or a caption slide with a beautiful bit of artwork, of this city, and then it's just Patrick Troughton, Wendy Padbury, and Frazer Hines walking around on a rather small set going, 'Goodness me, it's enormous!'"

Beneath the city is another quintessentially Troughton-esque setting. "One of the vibes of the Patrick Troughton era was that 'enclosed space' thing, with lots of darkness – because it saved on set!" smiles Nick. "The classic example is *The Web of Fear* [1968], which is a Yeti story set on the London Underground, and if you actually watch that story – which I think is beautiful – there's not a lot of set, they're shooting into darkness. That enabled you to give the impression that there was a vast canvas on which to have an adventure. So I thought, 'Why don't I transfer that known setting to another planet?', so you get the vibe of *The Web of Fear*, but it's in a completely different kind of underground network, with different things going on in it."

Further inspiration came from novelisations of those early serials.

"I thought, 'Now I've created my old-fashioned Second Doctor story, I'm going to imagine what it would be like if someone novelised it very imaginatively'," Nick recalls. "Of all *The Early Adventures* so far, this one's probably got the most narration, because I really seized upon that idea. I thought, 'If I've got narration, I will use it for a real narrative purpose'. I could have a whole sequence of scenes with Jamie on his own, because he didn't have to talk to anyone. So there's a lot more visual detail in this than I would normally have, because I've got the convention of just being able to describe it." **DAN TOSTEVIN**

TALKING BOOK

BBC AUDIO
RRP £20 (CD)

State of Decay

RELEASED 7 JANUARY

IN A NUTSHELL: The Doctor, Romana, K9 and Adric are trapped in the alternative universe of E-Space. Seeking help, they land on an unknown planet. There, they find a nightmare world where oppressed peasants toil for the Lords who live in the Tower, and where all learning is forbidden…

BBC Audio's readings of *Doctor Who* novelisations are going gothic – and continuing a story they first brought to audio a year ago.

"As we work our way through the Target Books archive, I like to follow on-screen chronology if there are particular story arcs," explains range editor Michael Stevens. "*State of Decay* is the middle story of the 'E-Space trilogy'. We published *Full Circle* in January 2014, so here's the continuation."

The tone, Michael reminds us, is one of "brooding menace! It's evocative of Hammer Horror films and, on a literary plane, the stories of Bram Stoker and Mary Shelley. There are dark woods to traverse, a creepy old stone tower to explore, and a trio of unequivocally naughty villains!

"I think it's one of [writer] Terrance Dicks' master strokes to elevate vampires to the level of Time Lord arch enemy. In doing so, he obliquely addresses the idea that on Earth it's all a fairy tale. K9 knows of vampire legends from 17 inhabited planets, and now we know the reason why: they were once an all-powerful and all-conquering race, whom the Time Lords eventually vanquished. Or did they…? In the story, the vampires we encounter behave just as you'd expect, thirsting for blood and not being fussy about whose it is."

Geoffrey Beevers is on board as reader.

"Although Geoffrey wasn't in the TV episodes, I knew he'd be able to lend the story a tone of menace," says Michael, "and I also thought his voice would suit several of Terrance Dicks' notable characters: the vampires Aukon and Zargo, and the rebels Kalmar and Tarak."

"This one is certainly big on tension," adds sound designer Simon Power, "when the Doctor and Romana find out the ghoulish secrets of Zargo, Camilla, and Aukon, and their deadly selection process. I won't give away any spoilers, but it's safe to say that a stake through the heart is nothing compared to the climax in *State of Decay*!"

The links to Hammer films are carried through into Simon's work. "Blood-sucking vampires and dark, brooding castles in the mist were certainly a great opportunity to pay homage to the hallowed halls of Hammer Horror," he nods, "with a few tremulous horns and shimmering violins. As for the sound design, a lot of it was centred around the labyrinthine cellars and corridors of the old castle: distant howling gusts of wind, crackling torches for light, and the deep, echoing heartbeat of the devilish menace that lurked below."

"Simon has served us well with the sound of bats, echoing chambers, and the terrible call of whatever lurks beneath the Tower," Michael enthuses. "As usual, his musical stings complement the reading at just the right moments."

State of Decay also marked the first TARDIS trip for companion Adric. "An interesting aspect is his apparent tendency to become allied with the enemy," points out Michael. "The template for that is set very well here, as he comes into conflict with Romana over whose side he is on…" **DAN TOSTEVIN**

> **"I think it's one of Terrance Dicks' master strokes to elevate vampires to the level of Time Lord arch enemy!"**
>
> **MICHAEL STEVENS BBC AUDIO EDITOR**

Fancy a quick bite? The Three Who Rule do in *State of Decay*.

TALKING BOOK

BIG FINISH
RRP £2.99 (download)

Black Dog

RELEASED 31 DECEMBER

IN A NUTSHELL: Part of the *Doctor Who: Short Trips* monthly series, this is a Fourth Doctor and Leela story read by Louise Jameson. To dream of the Black Dog is to die in terror within the week. The Doctor thinks it nothing but mindless superstition… but then Leela dreams the dream…

After opening the new *Short Trips* range back in January, Dale Smith returns with a new adventure for the Fourth Doctor and Leela.

"I think the important thing about writing Leela and the Doctor is to remember that while they are both absolutely the best of friends, they each think the other has got completely the wrong end of the stick about how the universe works," he chuckles. "I mean laughably wrong – to the point where it's not even worth getting annoyed about. They each think they're there to keep the other one out of trouble, and to shrug at the bystanders and say 'What can you do?'

"By the time of *Black Dog*, they've been together for a good while. The Doctor's stopped seeing her as a savage to be civilised, and they've come to an understanding. But Leela hasn't quite shaken off her suspicion that actually the Doctor is really a god or a magician. I think it's when she's stopped looking at him in awe that she's ready to head off on her own. We're not quite there yet, but it's getting there."

The eponymous hound – a godlike monster that invades dreams, spelling death for the dreamer – was an old idea of Dale's.

"When Leela – and to an extent, the Fourth Doctor – got involved, it had to shift a little," Dale recalls. "It became more of a hunter, more of a mad god. The Fourth Doctor seems to me to be the one who always comes up against the mad gods. In *Black Dog*, Leela has to decide which is stronger: her belief in the anger of dark gods, or her belief in herself. The weight of legend tells her that when she dreams the dream of the Black Dog, there is no escape for her. The Doctor tells her to question, to look for her own answers, but there is a part of her that still wants to cling to the power of belief, even if it means her inevitable death."

Indeed, *Black Dog* is very much Leela's story…

"Partly, I knew Louise Jameson would be reading it, and I'm such a massive fan of her radio work I wanted to give her something she could enjoy," Dale explains. "Mostly it was because Leela suited the original idea so well. The biggest advantage of her – and the most difficult thing to get right with her – is that she lets you create stories that in any other context would be supernatural, and still have them come out as *Doctor Who*. She can completely believe that she's up against an all-powerful god without being stupid or gullible. And instead of being cowed by that, it just makes her seem all the more fearless when she still stands up and fights back.

"I'd like the listener to feel like they've huddled in a doorway to shelter from the rain with two old friends," he sums up. "And to come away thinking how incredibly lucky we are to have Louise Jameson reading things to us." **DAN TOSTEVIN**

Tracy-Ann Oberman returns as Yvonne Hartman, the head of Torchwood One.

AUDIO DRAMA

BIG FINISH

RRP £9.99 (CD), £7.99 (download)

Torchwood: Rule One

RELEASED 31 DECEMBER

IN A NUTSHELL: The Mayor of Cardiff is killed by a shop dummy and the fight is on to see who will replace him. Yvonne Hartman, head of Torchwood One, is visiting the city to retrieve an invaluable alien device, but there's a bloodthirsty alien stalking the streets...

Yvonne Hartman, head of Torchwood One in the 2006 *Doctor Who* episodes *Army of Ghosts* and *Doomsday*, is the focus of the next *Torchwood* audio drama.

"I genuinely believe Yvonne is probably the most competent member of Torchwood we see on screen," laughs writer Joseph Lidster. "She makes one mistake that kills everyone, but before that, you get the impression she's actually very good at her job."

But in *Doctor Who*, wasn't she technically a villain?

"She has questionable morals about things, but that doesn't make her an out-and-out baddie," says Joe. "So that's what I wanted to do – put her in a situation that would explore that dichotomy in her character. Also, what I wanted to do was take away her access to everything else – all the technology and everything she usually can rely on. So it's her by herself, having to fall back on all those skills she has, without the team around her that usually support her."

The cast of *Torchwood: Rule One*.

One Rule takes Yvonne to Cardiff, shortly after the Auton invasion seen in *Rose* (2005), where she meets local councillor Barry Jackson.

"Yvonne is terrifying because she is so glamorous and lovely, but she's got this cold, ruthless side," Joe points out. "It's the same with him. I wanted to put her up against a character who reflects her a little bit."

There's a monster loose in the city, leaving beheaded corpses in its path, and it's up to Yvonne and Barry to investigate.

"I enjoyed the pace of it," grins Joe. "It's a very fast-paced thing. I really tried to get that feel of 'early *Torchwood*' – it's night time, it's raining, there's people drinking, there's a scary monster."

Yvonne seems to take the danger in her stride...

"She's very cool, very collected. A hotel burns down, and her response is she just tells people, 'Oh, get out, it won't be anything to worry about'." But Cardiff nightlife is another matter. "She's not impressed by the Chinese all-you-can-eat buffet," Joe smiles. "She goes to a dingy pub, and a not-very-nice nightclub, and she doesn't hide her disdain for them, which is fun. I always like people like that. But she copes, and she adapts. She pulls a face, makes a snide comment – but then she does drink a pint."

By the end of the night, we see some very different sides to Yvonne...

"That is the story," nods Joe. "It's her losing her glamour, her style, her poise, and it's taking her to quite a dark place. I think what I really wanted to do was get her to a place where she has to make a choice – and it's a horrible choice she has to make. So it's about getting her into that emotional mindset of, 'Do I go with what my heart says, or what my head says is right?', and because she's in such a broken state, that influences her. She does something, at the end of the story, that we certainly didn't see her do on TV..." **DAN TOSTEVIN**

BACK ON TV!

Your guide to *Doctor Who* repeats airing in the UK over the next month...

On HORROR

DECEMBER

The Brain of Morbius (Parts One & Two)	Thursday 10
The Brain of Morbius (Parts Three & Four)	Friday 11
The Masque of Mandragora (Parts One & Two)	Monday 14
The Masque of Mandragora (Parts Three & Four)	Tuesday 15
The Deadly Assassin (Parts One & Two)	Wednesday 16
The Deadly Assassin (Parts Three & Four)	Thursday 17
The Robots of Death (Parts One & Two)	Friday 18
The Robots of Death (Parts Three & Four)	Monday 21
The Talons of Weng-Chiang (Parts One & Two)	Tuesday 22
The Talons of Weng-Chiang (Parts Three & Four)	Wednesday 23
The Talons of Weng-Chiang (Parts Five & Six)	Thursday 24
Horror of Fang Rock (Parts One & Two)	Friday 25
Horror of Fang Rock (Parts Three & Four)	Monday 28
The Sun Makers (Parts One & Two)	Tuesday 29
The Sun Makers (Parts Three & Four)	Wednesday 30
The Ribos Operation (Parts One & Two)	Thursday 31

JANUARY

The Ribos Operation (Parts Three & Four)	Friday 1
The Pirate Planet (Parts One & Two)	Monday 4
The Pirate Planet (Parts Three & Four)	Tuesday 5
The Androids of Tara (Parts One & Two)	Wednesday 6

On WATCH

DECEMBER

Doctor Who: The Companions, *Doctor Who Explained*, *The Runaway Bride*, *Smith and Jones*, *The Shakespeare Code*, *Daleks in Manhattan*	Sunday 20
Doctor Who: The Companions, *Doctor Who Explained*, *Evolution of the Daleks*, *The Lazarus Experiment*, *42*, *Human Nature*, *The Family of Blood*	Monday 21
Blink, *Utopia*, *The Sound of Drums*, *Last of the Time Lords*, *Voyage of the Damned*, *Partners in Crime*	Tuesday 22
Voyage of the Damned, *The Fires of Pompeii*, *Planet of the Ood*, *The Sontaran Stratagem*, *The Poison Sky*, *The Doctor's Daughter*, *The Unicorn and the Wasp*	Wednesday 23
Silence the Library, *Forest of the Dead*, *Midnight*, *Turn Left*, *The Stolen Earth*, *Journey's End*	Thursday 24
The Next Doctor, *Planet of the Dead*, *The Waters of Mars*, *The End of Time* (Parts One and Two)	Friday 25
The Eleventh Hour, *The Beast Below*, *Victory of the Daleks*, *The Time of Angels*, *Flesh and Stone*	Saturday 26
A Night with the Stars: The Science of Doctor Who, *Culture Show Special: Me, You and Doctor Who*, *The Vampires of Venice*, *Amy's Choice*, *The Hungry Earth*, *Cold Blood*, *Vincent and the Doctor*	Sunday 27
Culture Show Special: Me, You and Doctor Who, *The Lodger*, *The Pandorica Open*, *The Big Bang*, *A Christmas Carol*, *The Impossible Astronaut*, *Day of the Moon*	Monday 28
A Christmas Carol, *The Curse of the Black Spot*, *The Doctor's Wife*, *The Rebel Flesh*, *The Almost People*, *A Good Man Goes to War*, *Let's Kill Hitler*	Tuesday 29
Night Terrors, *The Girl Who Waited*, *The God Complex*, *Closing Time*, *The Wedding of River Song*	Wednesday 30
The Snowmen, *Asylum of the Daleks*, *Dinosaurs on a Spaceship*, *A Town Called Mercy*, *The Power of Three*, *The Angels Take Manhattan*	Thursday 31

JANUARY

The Bells of Saint John, *The Rings of Akhaten*, *Cold War*, *Hide*, *Journey to the Centre of the TARDIS*, *The Crimson Horror*	Saturday 2
Nightmare in Silver, *The Name of the Doctor*, *The Time of the Doctor*, *The Day of the Doctor*, *Doctor Who: A Farewell to Matt Smith*	Sunday 3

All information correct at the time of going to press.

The Watcher's Fiendishly Festive…

Christmas Quiz

Hello, it's me. I was wondering if, after all these years, you'd like to meet to go over everything. No? Okay then, how about lighting a solitary candle on the day of execution? I'm not a filmstar, I'm not a popstar. I'm a blackstar, I'm a blackstar. It's so typical of me to talk about myself. I'm sorry. Tell you what, let's just forget the whole thing and stick to doing the **DWM** Christmas Quiz, shall we?

Yes, my little chartbusters: as Adele and David Bowie will tell you, 'tis the season of merriment, party hooters and jolly pop songs, which in turn means that it's time for me to unwrap my annual parcel of seasonal mindbenders. This year I've cooked up a bumper bonanza of 75 quizzical questions to tantalise your tinsel, bewilder your baubles and mystify your mince pies. And it's not just for fun – as usual, we have some glittering prizes. The five highest-scoring entries will be rewarded with a year's free **DWM** subscription. To be in with a chance, simply send your answers to the usual address, clearly marked 'CHRISTMAS QUIZ' on your envelope or email subject line, and not forgetting to include your postal address. The closing date is 5 January 2016, otherwise known as Twelfth Night. Or what you will.

Right then. Are we sitting comfortably? Pour yourself a glass of something nice, arm yourself with a bowl of nuts, and let's get cracking. And a very Merry Christmas to all of you at home!

The Watcher

NO PRESENTS TILL YOU'VE ANSWERED ALL THE QUESTIONS!

CONNECTIONS

What connects the following? (If you need a bit of help, you can find some extra clues upside-down at the bottom of the page.)

1. Clara Oswald; Ian Chesterton; the First Doctor; Rebec?
2. A Viking's nickname; the Master's favoured viewing?
3. Jenna Coleman; Simon Paisley Day; Mitzi McKenzie; John Wills; Murphy Grumbar?
4. Mike Yates; Eric Leeson; Tuar; Controller Sheard; a Cyberman from *The Invasion*?
5. An ensign sent on a deep penetration mission; a gunship pilot killed in a crash; a mineworker who dies by strangulation; a mineworker who survives and finds love?

CLUES 1 *It's about what's inside.* **2** *It's about a couple of small films.* **3** *It's about names.* **4** *It's about allegiances.* **5** *It's about a four-letter word.*

FAMOUS LAST WORDS

Give or take the occasional “Aaargh”, the following are the last words of which doomed characters from the 2015 series?

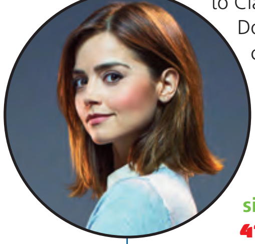
6 “Okay. It’s okay. Everything’s going to be fine.”

7 “They will kill me.”

8 “Don’t die.”

9 “Spare me, my brothers!”

10 “Of course.”



POP GOES WHO

All in the 2015 series…

11 Which 1974 pop classic was quoted by Missy?

12 Which 1977 pop classic became an unlikely pseudonym?

13 Which episode opens with someone shouting the title of a 1981 pop classic?

14 Which episode opens with someone shouting the title of a 1984 pop classic?

15 According to the Doctor, the UK needs protecting from the Zygons, and also from which classic chart-topping 1980 album?

ASHILDR’S ANAGRAMS

Unscramble the *Doctor Who* story titles.

16 Ashildr cheats outworn Odin.

17 Ashildr refutes one rocket.

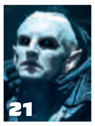
18 Ashildr fake it onto heaven.

19 Ashildr teen pop fest.

20 Ashildr beseeched a flint roof eternity.

DÉJÀ VU

Where have I seen you before…? A point for each Doctor and companion you can identify, and another point for naming the film, TV or stage show in question.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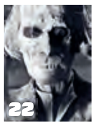
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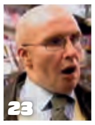
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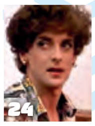
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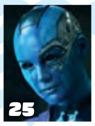
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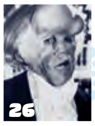
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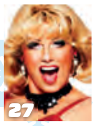
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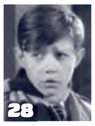
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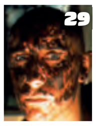
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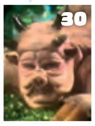

30

DÉJÀ ENTENDU

Where have I heard that one before…?

31 Forty-six years after its first appearance, which useful mechanism resurfaced with a slightly different name?

32 Whose mendacious invasion plan was remarkably similar to one thwarted by the Fourth Doctor and Romana?

33 Which possession of the Twelfth Doctor’s is four times more extensive than the version owned by his Second incarnation?

34 According to the Fourth Doctor, Leela would have loved which of Ashildr’s experiences?

35 Whose hush-hush operation was finally explained, 32 years after it was first mentioned?

36 Whose ballistic contingency proved more successful than when it was attempted 44 years ago?

37 What predicament was faced by Ashildr, and also, among others, by Turlough, Richard Mace, and the Third and Fifth Doctors?

38 What unusual behaviour did the Twelfth Doctor exhibit in the TARDIS and on the Le Verrier space station, which the Fourth Doctor previously did on Leela’s planet and Gallifrey, and the First Doctor once famously did in the TARDIS?

39 What did the Twelfth Doctor say to Clara in an attempt to change the subject, which the Fifth Doctor once said verbatim to Tegan under very similar circumstances?

40 What observation did the Twelfth Doctor make to Clara in a closing scene, which the Seventh Doctor said verbatim to Ace in another closing scene?

BUMP, TICKLE & TOPSY-TURVY

Still covering the whole of *Doctor Who* history: who, all similarly entitled…

41 Awoke from a snooze and called for his blunderbuss?

42 Was a cyborg’s grovelling sidekick?

43 Was often needed by a former companion?

44 Replaced Canon Smallwood at short notice?

45 Was both junior and senior, but not what he seemed?

46 Plotted to run a city, but underwent a nasty merger?

47 Was small of stature and dangerously pig-headed?

48 Caused a red alert in Yorkshire?

49 Were a decidedly weedy duo?

50 Earned a particularly nasty epitaph after pointing his gun in the wrong direction?

NUMBER-CRUNCHING

Some silly sums, all based on information in the 2015 series.

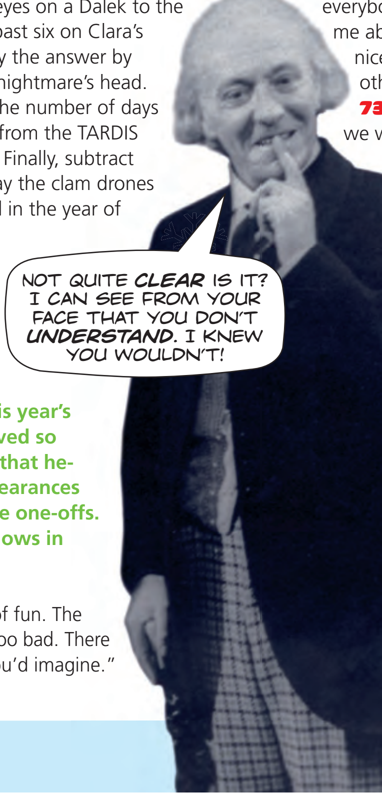
51 Multiply the Doctor’s Beethoven Symphony by the number of snipers demanded by Missy, and then subtract the necks of a swan. In which episode’s setting have we arrived?

52 Add the number of active nuclear power stations to the life expectancy in 1651, and who do you get?

53 Multiply the bounty on the Doctor’s head by the price of a Truth or Consequences dine-in lunch special, and then add Chopra’s age. At what startling notification have we arrived?

54 Subtract Nagata’s age from Deep-Ando’s age, and set the answer to one side. Now subtract Sullivan’s gas from a New Mexico highway exit. Put the two numbers side by side, separated by a colon. What’s the breaking news?

55 Add the number of eyes on a Dalek to the number of minutes past six on Clara’s dream clock. Multiply the answer by the bounty on the Knightmare’s head. Divide the result by the number of days it takes by longboat from the TARDIS to the Viking village. Finally, subtract how many miles away the clam drones are. You have arrived in the year of which catastrophe?


NOT QUITE *CLEAR* IS IT? I CAN SEE FROM YOUR FACE THAT YOU DON’T *UNDERSTAND*. I KNEW YOU WOULDN’T!

QUOTES OF THE YEAR

Finally, here are 20 quotes from 18 different people – meaning that one of this year’s DWM interviewees proved so exceptionally quotable that he-or-she makes three appearances below. All the others are one-offs. Who was quoted as follows in DWM during 2015?

56 “It was an awful lot of fun. The line-learning wasn’t too bad. There wasn’t as much as you’d imagine.”

57 “There’s no guarantee beyond this season. Neither has there been, ever.”

58 “He did behave quite camply. He was quite over the top. I kind of encouraged that because we needed some light entertainment.”

59 “He was totally incompetent. He wasn’t a very nice man – I had no rapport with him, I didn’t respect him, I didn’t think he knew what he was doing. He was stupid.”

60 “By the time I hit the set, I was already covered in cuts and bruises, and ready to take revenge on humanity.”

61 “I did become like a budgerigar pecking a button that I knew would release a pellet of appreciation.”

62 “I’d never even heard of Ultravox. I’m a Cilla Black man really.”

63 “I can terrify young people, even now. I just have to reach for my fringe, which is a tactic I use when I’m in the supermarket.”

64 “I was never 100% happy with the Mr Whippy ice cream cone.”

65 “I got so many letters from parents saying, ‘How dare you do this? I let my children stay up late… and they saw you in this disgusting role!’ So what do you do?”

66 “I don’t even think the actors were that much cop. You’ve seen the whole thing, haven’t you? Because that one still exists, sadly!”

67 “Brian Blessed would let me curl up in his big coat when I had a cold. He was so naughty and hilarious. Swore like a trooper. I was just 16! He pulled a sink off a wall in a rage, and made me witness it. ‘Watch this! Raargh!’”

68 “He offered to cut off his own eyelashes to make it easier for this shot… he is an amazing actor.”

69 “For me it’s acting, roller-skating and baking. I love to bake cupcakes, it’s one of the funnest things you can do.”

70 “‘Let’s get the Doctors to sit down and do an exam. Let’s measure the Doctors’ inside leg, and see which Doctor has the shortest inside leg.’ All that irritates and offends me.”

71 “And then, of course, I ended up writing a buddy-buddy movie with fart jokes.”

72 “Here am I, an old fart stuck in a care home, and everybody wants to talk to me about *Doctor Who*! It’s nice, but I did write a lot of other stuff.”

73 “It was insulting to everybody, and we were all very, very angry. Colin Baker was furious, there was almost steam coming out of his ears! … It was pointless and stupid.”

74 “I think I look like the fat roadie who thinks he’s in the band. I’ve got quite militant about not being photographed, because I can’t stand it… I turn up in my jumper, with egg on the front. It’s a new kind of humiliation.”

75 “I remember the days when we’d get Denys Fisher Cybermen with noses. It was like, ‘*Why can’t you get it right??*’ Now, you can go down to Forbidden Planet and get a scale model of Jamie McCrimmon for £700. It’s kind of like, be careful what you wish for.” **DWM**

WOTCHA!

The page that camped out in the Chilterns night after night. **BY THE WATCHER**

A History of Doctor Who in 100 Objects...

#65

SCORBY'S HAND LUGGAGE

As a special Christmas treat, I thought we might begin this month by tackling one of the most overlooked *Doctor Who* stories of all. I refer, of course, to the riddle wrapped in a mystery inside an enigma dressed as a clown that is 1982's eternally fascinating *Black Orchid*. Oh, come on. You know you love it.

3pm. Ish.

In *Black Orchid*'s opening TARDIS scene, the Doctor looks at the console and announces, we assume accurately, that it's "Three o'clock, June the 11th, 1925." With a dedication to the furtherance of human knowledge that knows no bounds, I have just checked – and guess what? June 11th 1925 was a Thursday. Now, pop me in a periwig and call me Bo Peep, but that's a pretty odd day of the week to hold a charity cricket match and fancy dress ball, isn't it? Doesn't anyone have a job to go to? Madge 'The Bitch' Cranleigh just doesn't give a hoot, does she? (Unlike Sir Robert, who has been known to appreciate a great one.)

Also... three o'clock? Granted it's midsummer, and the cricket match is already under way when we arrive ("His lordship won the toss and decided to bat first to give you time to get here," explains the trusty Tanner, who's far too loyal to call his employer 'Thicko' in front of strangers) – but even so, what with driving from the station, and then the cricket match, and coming over to the house to meet the mater, and the chit-chat, and the taking of cocktails to baths, and the finding of bodies in cupboards, and the dancing and the eating and the murdering and the arresting and the driving back to the railway station and then on to the nick and then back to the Hall again... if *Black Orchid* kicks off at three o'clock in the afternoon, then frankly it's amazing that the sun's still in the sky by the time Bolshie George takes his fateful plummet.

The phenomenon of the stretchy time-scale is by no means restricted to our favourite two-parter. Once you start looking, it happens all over the place. Take *Genesis of the Daleks*, in which the journey time between the Thal and Kaled domes fluctuates freely depending on the requirements of the plot. At one point Davros and Nyder pop there and back almost as swiftly as... well, as that bit in *Victory of the Daleks* where Amy and Bracewell are somehow able to re-equip a squadron of Spitfires and launch them into space while the Doctor is enjoying a quick Jammy Dodger with the paradigm gang.

Dunno what it is about Dalek stories, but *The Stolen Earth* is another curious case. The opening scene establishes that our planet is whisked across space early on a Saturday morning, which is all well and good except that it seems an odd time of day for *The Paul O'Grady Show* to be broadcast. (It's even odder, of course, that the studio audience bothers to turn up after such a calamity – those tickets really are gold dust – and it's a good thing that the communications satellites which allow viewers like Ianto to enjoy O'Grady's hilarious quip-fest were thoughtfully snatched across space with their orbits intact.)

Robot is another good one: next time you watch, just count the number of days and nights it clocks up. During the first couple of episodes there seems to be a fresh nightfall every five minutes, meaning that our heroes must spend most of their daytime hours doing naff-all. At the opposite end of the telescope is *The War Machines*, in which the discovery of a dead tramp at 3.00am is miraculously reported in the same morning's newspapers, complete with a smiley photograph of our luckless vagrant in happier times. Impressively swift work by Her Majesty's press there.

These days we're growing accustomed to globe-trotting storylines like the recent Zygon extravaganza, in which our heroes jet around the world at will, scattering narrative lacunae left, right and centre. In olden times this was rare, but not entirely unknown. Consider *The Seeds of Doom*, which diligently observes the passing days and nights in England, while discreetly playing down the international logistics which mean that the first three episodes must stretch over a week at the absolute minimum. You can't just fly direct to and from Antarctica, and certainly not in the little propeller planes seen in the story. You have to stop over at least once, generally in South Africa or South America. Now *there's* a missing scene: the Doctor and Sarah browsing the Duty Free shop in Buenos Aires, while Scorby and Keeler smuggle an alien pod through airport security.

IN A NUTSHELL: Don't Krynoid for me, Argentina.

With everyone jetlagged, things soon spiral out of control in the Antarctic.

Panto TOP TEN

▲ DOC WHITTINGTON ▲
▲ CAPTAIN JACK AND THE BEANSTALK ▲
▼ MOTHER TOOS ▼
▼ SALADIN ▼
▲ MR SINDERELLA ▲
▼ POOSH IN BOOTS ▼
▲ PETER PANGOL ▲
▲ ALI BARBARA AND THE TYPE 40 THIEVES ▲
▲ THE SLEEPING HOOTHI ▲
▲ SIR KEITH GOLDILOCKS AND THE THREE BORS ▲

THE Six Faces OF DELUSION

What could be more Christmassy than *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*? (Or *Lionel Richie's Wardrobe*, as a librarian friend of mine was once asked to locate – yes, honestly.) Which five of these nuggets lead to Narnia, and which one is a treacherous tray of Turkish delight?

Answer revealed at the bottom of the page.

1 In ITV's 1967 adaptation of *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*, Aslan was played by Bernard Kay, whose *Doctor Who* roles include Saladin in *The Crusade* and Tyler in *The Dalek Invasion of Earth*.

2 There's a 1979 animated version of *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* in which Aslan is voiced by Azal and Omega himself, Stephen Thorne.

3 In the BBC's 1988-90 series *The Chronicles of Narnia*, the body of Aslan was played by future *Doctor Who* monster-choreographer extraordinaire Ailsa Berk.

4 In the BBC's 1988-90 series *The Chronicles of Narnia*, the housekeeper Mrs Macready was played by Maureen Morris, who voiced the Great One in *Planet of the Spiders*.

5 In the BBC's 1988-90 series *The Chronicles of Narnia*, Tom Baker played Puddleglum the Marsh-Wiggle.

6 In the 2005 film of *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*, Father Christmas was played by Christopher Benjamin, known to you and me as Henry Gordon Jago in *The Talons of Weng-Chiang* and Colonel Hugh in *The Unicorn and the Wasp*.

CHRISTMAS H
IT'S THE BIOMEAD-OMETER!

1970

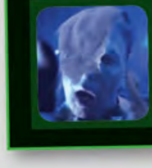
Mad professor invents a drilling process which accidentally turns people into werewolves.

1985

Mad professor invents a gene-splicing process which accidentally gives the Doctor orange eyebrows and an insatiable appetite for paella.

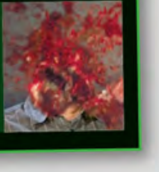
2007

Mad professor invents a rejuvenation machine which accidentally turns him into a praying mantis.



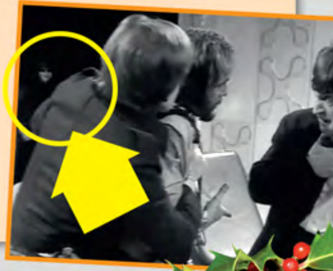
2015

Mad professor invents a sleep machine which accidentally turns the gunk in the corner of your eye into a sentient humanoid killer.



SUPPORTING ARTIST of the month

Back in the good old multi-camera days, it wasn't always enough to know when you were supposed to come on and when you were supposed to go off. Once the latter duty was discharged, you would straightaway embark upon the equally important business of making sure you *stayed* off. Such is the challenge faced by an alien guard in Episode Nine of *The War Games*. Dramatically overpowered by the rebels and dragged away at around 11:45, while the Doctor and Jamie remain on screen for a surreptitious confab with the never-knowingly-underplayed Mexican bandit Arturo Villar, our PVC-clad extra mistakenly believes himself to be safely off camera when, a few moments later, he edges into view in the background, happily off-duty and grinning broadly at the simple joy of being in *Doctor Who*. Bless. It's nice to see a fellow enjoying his work.



The Six Faces of Delusion: Number 6 deserves to be propelled onto the pavement with a punt up the posterior. Father Christmas is in fact played in the movie by the excellent James Cosmo who, inexplicably, has yet to appear in *Doctor Who*.

NEXT Issue!

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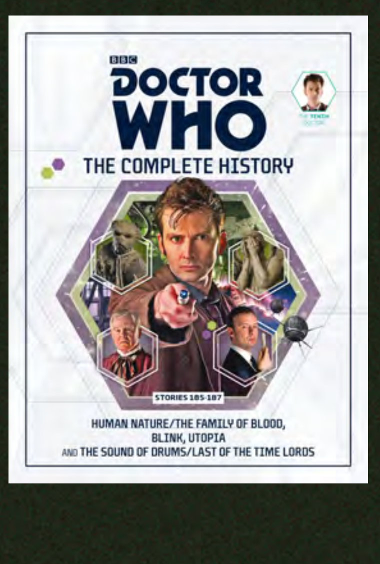
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